

America's Four Revolutions

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Webster defines revolution as the overthrow of the existing political order and its replacement by a new one. By that definition, the United States has experienced four political revolutions in the past two and a half centuries, not one. 1776 was the first revolution; the Civil War, the second; the Great Depression, the third; and the 2016 election marks the start of the fourth. Each involved the overthrow of the existing political order and its replacement by a new one. Webster does not define what is meant by a political order, but we may assume it to be the political establishment, political machine, deep state, political elite, or whatever term that defines the leadership of the existing order.

Surveying our history in terms of such “political orders,” rather than focusing on terms of presidents, or wars, or scandals, which is how our history is taught, gives us a better sense of historical continuity and perspective. Political parties are the means through which political machines express their will, but it is the political machine that runs the show. What I intend to demonstrate is that each of the first three political orders dominated the politics of their eras for over two generations, sometimes through different parties. Each also pursued a long-term strategy, which ultimately failed, leading to its overthrow.

By strategy I mean broad, structural goals that leaders choose but which are not always publicly articulated. These structural goals include a combination of geopolitical, military, economic, financial and other policy ends. Policies are the specific, concrete means devised to achieve these structural ends, but we have often mistakenly confused means with ends. A strategy transcends the policies of any president and is pursued until it has failed or is perceived to have failed by contenders within the political order. Policy failure produces policy change, but it is strategic failure, not policy failure, that produces revolutionary change. Implicit is the idea of political factionalism and continuous contention over the relationship of means to ends. Thus, within each political establishment we find the seeds of its own demise. Indeed, what is striking is that political orders seem to run through a predictable generational course, from inspiration to destruction. First come the builders, then the managers, and finally, the dilettantes, who fail and are overthrown.

The first political order after the revolution of 1776 pursued a long-term strategy of continued economic reliance on Great Britain; the second after the Civil War focused on an attempt to resolve the problem of post-World War I Germany; and the third after the Great Depression sought an accommodation with the Soviet Union and, after its collapse, China. The fourth political order is just emerging, but its strategic objectives are clear enough, and I will discuss them in due course.

The First American Revolution

The first political order that developed during and after the Revolutionary War was a coalition of leaders from north and

south. Southern Democratic plantation owners, epitomized by the Virginia dynasty, dominated and set a strategy that consolidated political independence from Great Britain but continued economic ties to the empire. Over time, dissatisfaction with continued subordination of the growing American economy to the British mercantilist system would become the nub of the argument within the political order that would lead to the Civil War and the overthrow of the Southern Democratic slave owners. The notion of an “American System” independent of the British Empire had arisen relatively early in the history of the new republic, especially in the ideas of Alexander Hamilton and Henry Clay, but found little traction until a part of the political establishment coalesced into the Republican Party in the 1850s.

Territorial expansion and continuation of the slaveholding system were believed essential to the continued dominance of the Southern Democrats; without new land and labor they could not sustain the cotton, tobacco, and rice production upon which their primacy was based. Believing their system to be threatened by the emergence of additional free states as the nation expanded westward, Southern leaders chose secession as the means to preserve their system. Parenthetically, it was no small irony that the technological innovation that occurred in these industries after the civil war—the cotton gin, cigarette-rolling and rice-planting machines—would dramatically reduce labor costs and thus the need for slaves, but by then it was too late.¹

¹I am indebted to Robert “Judge” Morris for his comments and suggestions, especially regarding the effect of technological change in agriculture in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The Second American Revolution

The Civil War overthrew the Democratic slave-holding political order and replaced it with a center-right Republican political order that would dominate American politics until the Great Depression. The new Republican-dominated order set the strategic objective of an independent American system economically separate from the British imperial system. Over the next thirty-five years, by the end of the century, these leaders created the largest, most powerful economy in the world. They did it by keeping British products out with a high-tariff regime, but welcoming in all innovative technology, skilled persons, and foreign investment. They did it despite failing to reconstruct the South, as westward expansion materially galvanized economic growth, defining the parameters of America—north, south, east, and west.

Even before the turn of the century, consideration was being given to the best ways to use American power on the international stage. The acquisition of a small “empire” in the Philippines fed those aspirations. The Democrats in opposition strove to break up the very sinews of Republican-dominated establishment by focusing on its base in big business. The “trust busters” claimed that industrial monopolies maintained unfairly high price levels and needed to be broken up to bring prices down. These were essentially political arguments cloaked in plausible eco/humanitarian and egalitarian terms. Recent studies have shown that prices under the monopolies were in

fact lower, or not substantially higher than those that resulted from their breakup.²

To grasp the significance of the debate about America's role on the world stage requires a glance at the entire stage. The United States was not the only country rising to prominence in the last quarter of the 19th century. Along with the United States, a newly unified Germany in 1871, Meiji Japan in 1868, and Tsarist Russia after 1861 were also rising, although the Russians were experiencing domestic unrest following defeat by Japan in the Far East. In relative decline were Great Britain, France, and Italy; in absolute decline were the Chinese, Ottoman, and the Austro-Hungarian empires.

Great Britain became highly active in attempting to maintain and strengthen its imperial position. After the American Revolution, British strategy had been to contain and limit US continental expansion even while promoting continued economic integration into the empire. By the May 1871 Treaty of Washington, at the latest, London began to shift away from "splendid isolationism" of the empire to a more determined balance of power approach, recognizing the adverse impact of the rise especially of Germany. Britain shifted strategy to a "special relationship" with the United States, expecting that Washington would become a counterbalance to Berlin. But Britain also developed an alliance with Japan in 1902 and

² See Phil Gramm and Jerry Ellig, "Big Bad Trusts' Are A Progressive Myth," *Wall Street Journal*, October 2, 2019. (Article appeared in the October 3, 2019 print edition.)

entered into a “triple entente” with France and Russia five years later.³

World War I was a climactic event whose consequences are still being unraveled. The United States stayed aloof from the carnage of the war, which evolved into a battlefield stalemate, except to provide financial loans and war materiel to the British and the French. That changed with the abdication of the Tsar, the collapse of imperial Russia, and its withdrawal from the war. Although unrestricted German submarine warfare was the precipitating rationale for US entry, the release of German forces from the eastern front brought the United States in to counter the German advantage and ensure victory for the British side.

The end of the conflict led to questions about how to deal with Germany, and, I maintain, it would be the failure of the center-right Republican establishment to solve the German problem that led to its demise, although that is only apparent in retrospect. Democratic President Woodrow Wilson’s approach, the “Fourteen Points,” was tried first. It was thinly disguised as promoting self-determination for subjugated minorities but was in fact designed to break up the German empire into several smaller states. (Franklin D. Roosevelt would emulate this approach during World War II with a scheme to break up Nazi Germany into seven parts.)

British Prime Minister David Lloyd George and French Premier Georges Clemenceau collaborated to outmaneuver Wilson regarding a settlement of the war. The Versailles Treaty

³ See Charles S. Campbell, *From Revolution to Rapprochement: The United States and Great Britain, 1783-1900*, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1974).

created a new structure for Europe which dealt openly with the German problem, keeping Germany largely intact, but hedging it east and west by pro-French and English states, paying only lip service to Wilson's Fourteen Points. Their unstated ulterior goal was to employ the Eastern European states not only to contain Germany in the East, but also to serve as a barrier against Russian communist promotion of revolution. The Republican establishment refused to recognize the Soviet Communist regime.

But while Lloyd George and Clemenceau agreed on structure, they fell out over the reparations question. Clemenceau wanted to isolate and punish the Germans by demanding that they make substantial annual reparations in cash and kind, a payback for the wealth transfer the Germans had exacted from the French after 1871 and for the damage they had inflicted during the Great War. Lloyd George, on the other hand, argued that heavy reparations would prevent economic recovery and make it impossible for the Germans to pay. A Reparations Commission established by the Versailles Treaty laid out a compromise schedule of payments, but the agreement quickly proved unsustainable.⁴

Hoping to restore political and economic stability to Europe, in April 1922 Lloyd George convened an all-European conference at Genoa, including the Soviets, but not the Americans. Lloyd George thought that by inviting both Germany and the Soviet Union to the conference he could co-opt them, but what he accomplished was to give them an opportunity to collaborate. Lloyd George succeeded in establishing a new gold standard and persuading Germany to join in. But the conference

⁴ For details see Sally Marks, "The Myths of Reparations," *Central European History* 11, no. 3 (September 1978): 231-255.

founded over French and Belgian demands that the Soviets agree to repay the Tsarist debt of \$60 billion and return seized property in the Soviet Union before they would issue new loans.

As Genoa collapsed, the Germans and Russians slipped off to nearby Rapallo where they signed a secret agreement to expand economic engagement and begin military cooperation. The Treaty of Versailles had prohibited German rearmament, which the Germans circumvented with construction of an aircraft factory, pilot training facility, and chemicals industry deep inside the Soviet Union. At first, this cooperation was overlooked. After all, these technologies could be explained as “dual use,” which could assist in economic recovery.⁵

German-Soviet cooperation defeated the British-French scheme to contain Germany and isolate the Soviet Union. After the Germans stopped making reparations payments in late 1922, the Reparations Commission declared Germany in default and French and Belgian troops promptly occupied the Ruhr iron and coal region, but it was plain that a new solution to the problem of Germany was required. Hitler, by the way, was barely visible on the political spectrum. The Munich beer hall putsch of November 8, 1923 led to Hitler’s arrest and imprisonment (for nine months) where he wrote *Mein Kampf*. By the time he was released in December 1924, Germany was experiencing robust economic growth. Hitler entered politics but was consigned to the sidelines. It was the German political

⁵ Harvey Munshaw, *Extra! Extra! Read All About It: The British and American Press’ Coverage of German-Soviet Collaboration, 1917-1928*, Thesis (M.A.), Wichita State University, May 2013.

establishment that had made the decision to cooperate with the Soviet Union, not Hitler.

Under the aegis of US President Calvin Coolidge, British and American financiers devised the Dawes Plan, May 1924, which essentially pursued the British approach of promoting German economic recovery to enable reparation payments. That, in turn, would enable the British and French to repay US war loans. It was also hoped that economic recovery would lead to the reintegration of Germany into Europe and away from the Soviet Union. Reducing reparations payments and pouring some eighty billion dollars into Germany quickly brought recovery. The late 1920s were the Weimar Republic's "golden age" and America's "roaring twenties."

Economic assistance and German recovery were followed by another diplomatic approach. In October 1925, Britain and France sponsored a conference in Locarno, Switzerland whose purpose was to normalize German relations with all of Europe and admit Germany into the League of Nations. Although there was much hope that peace would finally come to Europe, the underlying question was whether economic recovery would persuade the German leadership to choose a peaceful path and abandon the secret rearmament program based on cooperation with the Soviet Union.

The attempt to wean Germany away from the Soviet Union failed. The following April, in the Treaty of Berlin, Germany secretly expanded its rearmament program with the Soviets, agreeing to construct a tank factory, training facilities, and proving ground near Kazan 450 miles east of Moscow. There could be no mistaking the meaning of the tank plant. Germany was rebuilding its military machine, preparing for a

new war, and using American money to do it. It is important to reiterate that the German political establishment made the decision to rearm, not Adolf Hitler, who was still a minor figure on the sidelines of German politics.

It was a decisive moment. The Western powers could not continue on their present path, which had failed. The French considered attacking Germany but would not act without British support. The British would not support a new war because they could not afford it, either financially or demographically. Most importantly for this discussion, the US political order—the center-right machine that had run the United States since the Civil War—had placed its bet on leading Germany onto a peaceful path and lost.

What followed was a series of delaying actions, both diplomatic and economic. First was the proposal to outlaw aggressive war as a national policy. The Kellogg-Briand Pact was signed in August 1928 by nearly every nation, including Germany, Japan, Italy, the Soviet Union, and the United States. As there was no restriction on national defense, armies were built in the name of national defense. The French rearmed, built a large and powerful army, but chose a defensive strategy based on the Maginot Line which took a decade to complete. The United States withdrew into isolation and did not rearm, but Germany, Japan, Italy, and the Soviet Union did, rapidly and massively.

Then, there was the strategic decision to shut down the money flow to Germany on the theory that if it would not prevent German rearmament, it would at least delay it and perhaps make war less likely. Washington and Paris pursued parallel policies. From late in 1926, France stabilized its

exchange rate, attracting capital inflows. The central bank sold off foreign currency in exchange for gold, raising the ratio of gold in its reserve base and draining gold reserves from other countries (especially Great Britain). Between 1926 and 1932 French gold holdings went from 7 percent of the world total to 27 percent. The inflows were not fully monetized, which meant that they represented a net reduction in the total money supply.⁶

Washington followed the French lead, but with far more powerful effect. From February 1928 the Federal Reserve began raising interest rates amid concerns about stock market speculation. Higher US rates and tighter credit conditions curtailed investment outflows to Germany and elsewhere, and drew gold into the United States, which also was not monetized, further reducing the global money supply. Within two years the United States held 38 percent of the world's gold and combined with France the two countries accounted for nearly two-thirds of it. In 1929, Washington scrapped the Dawes Plan, replacing it with the Young Plan, which reaffirmed Germany's reparations debt, mandating payments until 1988, albeit at a reduced rate. By that time, the Germans had built the largest economy in Europe, perhaps the second largest in the world.

In the United States, as Milton Friedman and Anna Schwartz show in their seminal *Monetary History*, the failure to counter the deflationary effect of a shrinking money supply, especially after the stock market crash, deepened and

⁶ Douglas A. Irwin, "Did France Cause the Great Depression?", NBER Working Paper No. 16350 (September 2010), 8-10.

lengthened the depression.⁷ I believe that shutting down the money flow to Germany and withdrawing from Europe were Washington's main objectives—even if not publicly acknowledged. Consistent with this approach, the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930 triggered a trade war that reduced commerce with Europe, disengaging the United States. President Calvin Coolidge and his successor Herbert Hoover no doubt believed they could control the deflation that followed. They were wrong. The high tariff approach seemed to be a replay of the strategy adopted after the Civil War but was inappropriate to the conditions prevailing in the 1920s, and it backfired. Decisions to keep money tight and to raise taxes only exacerbated the problem, ensuring Hoover's electoral defeat.

The Third American Revolution

The center-right Republican establishment's strategy of attempting to lead Germany onto a path of peace had failed and it would have its political consequences. The 1932 election was the third revolution, which saw the rise of the center-left political order that would hold power for three generations, until the 2016 election. President Franklin D. Roosevelt would transform American society virtually root and branch, entrenching the new political order in every institution.⁸ Above all, taking Orwell's dictum to heart that "he who controls the present controls the past; and he who controls the past controls

⁷ Milton Friedman and Anna J. Schwartz, *A Monetary History of the United States, 1867-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), Chapter 7.

⁸ See Burton Folsom, *New Deal or Raw Deal?* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2008).

the future,” the new establishment put in place a “liberal” media-education system designed to interpret events and reinterpret the past in ways that would reinforce and legitimize its rule. It was necessary because FDR would inaugurate a fundamental change in US strategy.

Beginning with FDR, the United States would pursue a long-term strategy centered on reaching an accommodation with the Soviet Union, which he recognized in November 1933. During this era, every president would seek *détente* with the Soviet Union to one degree or another, and those who sought to change that strategy were removed from power. Four “deviated” from the *détente* path. They were Harry Truman, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Ronald Reagan.

Truman’s case was particularly opaque. Forced to adopt a strategy of anti-Soviet containment in 1950 as a result of the outbreak of the Cold War, he nevertheless kept the door open to accommodation. In the founding document of containment, NSC-68, it was plainly stated that the ultimate purpose of the United States was “to negotiate a settlement with the Soviet Union (or a successor state or states) on which the world can place reliance as an enforceable instrument of peace.”⁹ In short, an adversarial position would be maintained only until a leadership emerged in Moscow with whom the United States could negotiate an amicable accommodation. But as the Cold War deepened in the Korean War, Truman’s identification with the anti-Soviet containment strategy meant that the political

⁹ “A Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary (Lay), Washington, April 14, 1950, NSC-68” *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1950, National Security Affairs; Foreign Economic Policy, vol. 1, ed. Neal H. Peterson et al. (Washington: Department of State, 1950), Document 85:276.

establishment would not support his continuation in office. The containment-détente dichotomy would bedevil American politics from then on.

Dwight D. Eisenhower, who ran as a Republican, could just as easily have run on the Democratic ticket. He would make several attempts at accommodation with Moscow, the most extraordinary being to invite Nikita Khrushchev to Camp David and Gettysburg. On his way out of office he warned publicly about the power of the military-industrial complex whose leaders supported the containment strategy.

John F. Kennedy sought to return to FDR's détente strategy and to withdraw from forward positions gained since World War II, beginning with preliminary steps of withdrawal from Vietnam. Following the Cuban Missile Crisis, he offered a full-fledged détente to Moscow, an approach that collapsed with his assassination. A nuclear test ban, the hot line, and cooperation in space were some of his proposals. His successor, Lyndon Johnson, reversed Kennedy's approach and attempted to resurrect containment, but failure in Vietnam would spell his demise. Indeed, instrumental to his failure was the opposition of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Kennedy's man.

Richard Nixon appears in retrospect to have been a compromise candidate, selected because the Democratic Party's brand had been severely tarnished by failure in Vietnam and the domestic crisis of 1968. After half a decade of conditioning in John Mitchell's law firm in New York, Nixon agreed to seek détente with Moscow and an honorable withdrawal from Vietnam. His administration was therefore a coalition government, with Nixon the advocate of containment and Henry Kissinger, his National Security Adviser, the advocate

of détente. But Nixon tricked the establishment even while fulfilling his promises. He did reach agreements on arms control and missile defense as well as significant commercial deals with the Russians, but he also opened the door to China, supporting Beijing against Moscow and enabling the prospect of a successful extrication from Vietnam. Strengthening containment was anathema to the détentists, who drove Nixon from office with the threat of impeachment.¹⁰

It is important to note that impeachment is only possible if the opposition party controls both chambers of Congress. Thus, Democratic control of the House and Senate determined Nixon's fate. In our history, during each period of dominance by an establishment of one party, virtually no president of the opposition party ever controlled both chambers of Congress. This would be true for the various opposition parties during the 1776-1860 period, for the Democrats during the 1860 to 1932 period, and for the Republicans during the 1932-2016 period.¹¹ The only exceptions were Dwight Eisenhower, during the first two years of his presidency; and George W. Bush, who held a majority in both houses briefly in the aftermath of 9/11. (In my view, while these presidents, along with George H.W. Bush, ran as Republicans, none qualifies as opposed to the Democratic establishment's strategy.)

The establishment's claim that Nixon and Kissinger were the closest of allies is another falsehood, fully demonstrated by Kissinger's actions when he took over as Nixon became mired in

¹⁰ See the author's *The Nixon-Kissinger Years: The Reshaping of American Foreign Policy* (St. Paul: Paragon House, 2001).

¹¹ Wikipedia, "Party Divisions of United States Congresses."

the Watergate scandal. He reversed every policy Nixon had implemented in contradiction to the détente strategy. Central to this turnabout was withdrawal from forward positions created under containment. This meant permitting Nixon's China opening to lie stillborn; pulling the plug on South Vietnam; attempting but failing to withdraw from South Korea; and pulling the plug on Ethiopia, to name the most obvious.

Gerald Ford languished as a place holder for Kissinger and the establishment's efforts to promote détente with Moscow. Nelson Rockefeller, leader of the establishment in those days, assumed the position of vice president to ensure that there would be no deviation from the plan. The Russians, as they would consistently do, paid lip service to détente, but pursued their own objective of seeking world dominance based on a huge investment in intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Despite the utter failure of Kissinger's détente strategy, Democratic candidate Jimmy Carter campaigned on and promised his full dedication to restoring détente with the Soviet Union and the withdrawal of the United States from forward positions on the Eurasian landmass. He specifically declared as his first order of business his intention to withdraw US forces from South Korea. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, the chief protagonist for détente in the Carter administration, attempted to bring about the president's objectives but the result was failure after failure from Europe to Africa, to Asia and to Central America, including the collapse of the shah in Iran and the Communist revolution in Nicaragua. On the other hand, the

Soviet Union advanced, invading Afghanistan, and supporting “revolutionary” movements on every continent.¹²

In his fourth year, attempting to restore some semblance of a credible balance of power, the president vacillated, neither able to jettison détente entirely, nor embrace containment fully. Having presided over disastrous domestic policies that left the nation in economic crisis with the highest inflation rate in post-war history, and foreign policy failures such as the Iran hostage rescue attempt and the inept response to the Cuban boatlift, Carter would be rejected by the people and be one of only two presidents during the post-war era to serve a single term in office (George H.W. Bush was the other).

Ronald Reagan was the most formidable and most successful of the opponents of the détente strategy. Like Nixon, he would be driven from office, albeit in disguised form, kicked upstairs but not out. His administration, like Nixon’s, was also a coalition government. His secretaries of state, first Alexander Haig, then George Shultz, both opposed the president’s victory strategy against the Soviet Union. Haig, claiming prerogatives beyond his office, pressed for “hardheaded détente,” but détente, nonetheless. After Reagan dismissed Haig, his replacement, George Shultz, was far more successful in opposing his president, resembling Cyrus Vance’s style of pandering to Soviet power.¹³

It would be George Shultz who masterminded the capture of control of American foreign policy from the president

¹² See the author’s *The Carter Years: Toward A New Global Order* (St. Paul: Paragon House, 1991).

¹³ See the author’s four volume study, *The Reagan Revolution*.

in the wake of the Iran-Contra crisis. Reagan, fearing impeachment by a Democratic majority in control of both houses of Congress, chose to promote his legacy over continued struggle with the establishment, and so he relinquished power. For the final two years of his administration, he would be reduced to watching movies in the family quarters of the White House, called upon to sign on to Shultz's initiatives where necessary. Unfortunately, choosing to burnish his legacy meant that the détenteist political establishment would retain power over American life for an additional thirty years.

From December 1986, Shultz reversed every single one of Reagan's policies in his effort to reach an accommodation with the Soviet Union. Engaging in negotiation with the Russians over Nicaragua, Angola, Mozambique, Cambodia, and Afghanistan, Shultz "settled" resistance movements in favor of Moscow—every one. Shultz rejected Reagan's attempt to replace mutual assured destruction with strategic defense and negotiated the treaty on elimination of theater-nuclear weapons, which was flawed from its inception. The effect of the 1987 Treaty to remove and destroy intermediate-range missiles was to confer on Moscow nuclear domination of Europe. SDI, the Strategic Defensive Initiative was quietly shelved.

Shultz's victory led to the consolidation of establishment control from then until 2016, but the objective they had so long sought was compromised almost immediately. The collapse, or rather, the controlled demolition and rebranding of the Soviet regime into a pseudo-democratic state, forced a major change. The dissolution of the Soviet empire left the United States as the last superpower—but facing the problem of how to stabilize the vast Eurasian landmass.

One response was NATO expansion eastward, incorporating states formerly under Soviet control, but the surprise development came from the United States' offer to assist in the modernization of China to provide stability in the Far East. It was George H.W. Bush who paved the way for the modernization of China in the immediate wake of the Soviet collapse in late 1991, a policy that Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama embraced with gusto. And it was George W. Bush who gave us the global war on terror and the endless wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

These were the days of so-called "globalization" and the "Washington consensus," when it seemed that the dilettantes now running the establishment believed that democratic regimes could emerge anywhere and everywhere if enough money and technology were injected into the mix. This was particularly true of China, where it was proclaimed that the Chinese Communists would be transformed, Pygmalion-like, if enough Western capital and know-how were injected. China's inclusion into the World Trade Organization sharply accelerated the transfer of American wealth, technology, expertise, and jobs to China. In this same time frame, the Russians parlayed resentment of the West into a dominant faction in OPEC determined to raise oil prices by restricting supply. The price of crude oil rose steadily during the early 2000s and skyrocketed to a high of \$147 per barrel, contributing to the Great Recession of 2008-09.¹⁴

It was the clear failure of this strategy, with its terribly damaging effects upon the country, hollowing out the economy,

¹⁴ See the author's "The US-Russian Struggle for World Oil: 1979-2010," in Alain Beltran, ed., *Le Pétrole et la Guerre: Oil and War* (Brussels: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2012).

weakening the military, and fracturing social cohesion that convinced the American people that enough was enough. The rise of the Tea Party, named after the Boston Tea Party, dramatically altered the Republican Party, and influenced political discourse thereafter. A pox on both Democratic and Republican Parties as Tweedledum and Tweedledee, led to the rise of Donald Trump who rode to the presidency on the surge of that anti-establishment sentiment.

The Fourth American Revolution

The decisions I have discussed led us directly to the Fourth American Revolution and it takes place within a global realignment from the bi-polar US-Soviet structure of the Cold War to the tri-polar US-Russian-Chinese world we see plainly before us. I like to refer to the new order as a tri-polar world with hanging regional chads—in Europe, the Middle East, South, Southeast Asia, the Far East and South America where the three powers contend and sometimes collaborate in seeking advantageous geopolitical outcomes.

Contrary to the wishes of Democrats and their Republican allies, there is no going back to a world that no longer exists. The old bipolar order is in the dustbin of history and the emergence of China as a great power is a new factor. The task before us today is how to keep the new tri-polar order in an acceptable balance and avoid becoming odd man out. Foreign and trade policies are being revamped to serve this end; and American military power is undergoing the first significant modernization since the Reagan years, to ensure that the nation's role remains decisive as the ultimate balancer on the world stage.

The domestic political order is also being remodeled across the board. The left-of-center political order and its institutions ushered in by FDR are being replaced and/or reformed. The beginnings of the fourth revolution can be dated to the Clinton administration and the rise of the Tea Party, which briefly propelled the Republican Party into control of both chambers of Congress. But the Republican Party itself is undergoing a substantial transformation, as those who insist on supporting the old political order lose, retire, or otherwise move on. All the institutions of the executive branch are being rebuilt and re-staffed, as well, but as was the case in the three previous revolutions the transition will be rough and tumble.

Similar to the transformations after the first revolution where state-building was the order of the day, or after the Civil War when reconstruction and expansion predominated, or under FDR who acted under the cover of the Great Depression and in response to war, the Trump administration now acts under the impact of the crippling legacy of Barak Obama and the Coronavirus epidemic. This calamity, as of this writing, is having much the same impact on US society as the Great Depression. Once surmounted, it will offer the same kind of opportunity afforded FDR to re-fashion American society and global relations along new, long-lasting lines.

President Trump must contend with the resistance of the long-entrenched center-left political order determined to do everything in its power to thwart the emergence of the new one. The impeachment tactic, which could not succeed given Republican control of the Senate, was combined with a major failed effort to overthrow the president from within, based on the spurious charge of Russian collusion. The resistance by the former establishment's allies, Democrat and Republican, lurking

in just about every institution inside and outside of government, constitutes a graphic illustration of what amounts to the Deep State in action. After all, the center-left Democrat-dominated political order had been in power for three generations and built the institutional structure to serve their interests. The transition to the emerging new Republican establishment will be a major struggle, but Trump is remodeling and re-structuring the nation in much the same way that FDR did, and it will serve a new strategy in a new era.