

up frequently: war and peace. Conservatives tout the importance of an activist U.S. world military to fight off Soviet communism, or now that that is dead, what Robert Nisbet here sees as the “aggressive, imperialist totalitarisms in the world.” The only specific examples he gives are China and Cuba. While none of the libertarians collected here talk about foreign policy, the conservatives clearly are irritated that many libertarians refuse to bow to the exigencies of U.S. world imperialism.

This volume is worthwhile for interesting contributions from both sides, such as M. Stanton Evans’s intriguing contention that pre-enlightenment traditions contain more support for limited state power than many moderns customarily suppose and Doug Bandow’s argument from an evangelical Christian perspective that, contra Bozell, state power has no useful role to play in the enforcement of Christian morality.

But essays like Russell Kirk’s, where he condemns libertarians as “metaphysically mad,” and obsesses over his notion that libertarians are disproportionately gay and very unpleasant characters besides, show that however much they may find themselves allied in specific instances against state encroachment, the relationship between libertarians and conservatives is apt to remain one of occasional alliance and persistent mistrust. □

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World Disorders: Troubled Peace in the Post-Cold War Era

by Stanley Hoffmann

Rowman & Littlefield • 1998 • 279 pages • \$29.95

Reviewed by Ivan Eland

Harvard professor Stanley Hoffmann is an unbridled interventionist. Although he decries any American role as the global policeman, he proposes intervening for so many purposes and under so many circumstances that chevrons begin to form on his shoulders.

Hoffmann rejects the argument that the

United States should withdraw from entanglements and international commitments. Although he admits that few threats to American vital interests exist—he makes an exception for the Middle East—he declares that a world of diffuse disorder could rapidly become a dangerous place. He argues that societies and economies are too interdependent for the United States to be sure that what happens in small, poor, weak nations will not affect Americans. He maintains that apathy about what happens in “far away countries of which we know nothing” can lead through contagion—and through the message that passivity sends to troublemakers—to “creeping escalation of disorder and beastliness that will, sooner or later, reach the shores of the complacent, the rich, and the indifferent.” In short, Hoffmann endorses the domino theory of instability.

He then goes even further, taking issue with those who say that U.S. foreign policy should be based on interests and not values. Hoffmann asserts that morality is a national interest.

Thus Hoffmann advocates intervention in foreign internal crises when the turmoil threatens regional or international security or when human rights violations become so massive that they cannot be ignored. His broad definition of massive human rights violations includes genocide, mass killings short of genocide, ethnic cleansing, brutal and large-scale repression, mass rape, famines, epidemics, massive breakdowns of law and order, and flights of refugees.

Not only does Hoffmann favor unilateral U.S. intervention under those circumstances, but he advocates the formation of an international military force under United Nations auspices—with member nations pledging earmarked forces for use by the Security Council. The international force would conduct limited police operations against minor troublemakers or deter aggression against threatened states that ask for U.N. troop deployments. He laments that no international taxation exists to support such a force. Given the record of the United Nations in peacekeeping missions, the potential for catastrophic bungling in more ambitious military missions makes this proposal scary.

Our author has an activist military agenda but fails to provide priorities for intervention by a nation that has limited funds and military assets. Even the sole remaining superpower has its limits. More important, although Hoffmann understands that interventions can be difficult, he should realize that in many cases they fail (clan warfare continued after the United States left Somalia, and Haiti is sliding back into dictatorship) and that often outsiders cannot deal with intractable problems that have been around for decades or centuries.

Hoffmann identifies and labels three groups in the American foreign policy community: sheriffs, missionaries, and beacons. The sheriffs want to stop the bad guys of the international community at high noon. The missionaries eschew force and advocate foreign aid and public and private programs to export democracy and market capitalism. In contrast to the other two camps, the beacons merely want the United States to be a showcase of liberty and free enterprise for other nations to emulate. It is unfortunate that this book gives short shrift to the beacons and so extols the costly, dangerous alternatives. □

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The Food & Drink Police—America's Nannies, Busybodies and Petty Tyrants

by James T. Bennett and
Thomas J. DiLorenzo

Transaction • 1999 • 161 pages • \$24.95

Reviewed by George C. Leef

Threats to the freedom of Americans to make their own choices and run their own lives are proliferating as fast as mushrooms after a heavy summer rain. Some have already grown to huge, Alice-in-Wonderland proportions (like the IRS), while many others are just sprouting. In the latter category is the threat to our freedom to choose what to consume. Prohibition is gone, but prohibitionists lurk among us. This new book from Bennett and DiLorenzo is about them—America's

nannies, busybodies, and petty tyrants, as their subtitle says.

We have always had nags and scolds. In a free society, people are entitled to use their liberty in peaceful ways of their choosing and that includes hectoring other people about their choices. Putting up with them, listening if we desire or ignoring them when we would rather be left alone, is one of freedom's tradeoffs. (In fact, there are probably people who regard *us* as nags and scolds, always telling them not to support Social Security, minimum-wage laws, trade restrictions, and so forth.) The trouble begins when they start turning to the coercive power of the state to impose their desires and values on others. Bennett and DiLorenzo introduce us to a host of individuals and organizations that want to tell you what to eat and drink, and have no compunction about employing the power of the state to make you behave.

One of the chief villains of the book is the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI). The authors paid a visit to the Washington office of CSPI, where "Scarecrows scurried here and there, grimly clutching faxes and fact sheets that no doubt proved or at least asserted with the basso voice of pseudo-scientific surety that whatever you are eating at this very moment *will kill you.*" That would not bother me (or the authors) except that the CSPI folks are not content just to warn about overindulging in *crème brûlée*. They scowl at virtually everything tastier than a plate of rice and lentils and want to make certain that you don't push that aside in favor of the *crème brûlée*. "The Center's agenda," write the authors, "is harsh neo-Puritanism. Ban, restrict, end, and regulate are common admonitions in CSPI's publications."

Another malefactor is Jeremy Rifkin, a former left-wing activist turned food nanny. Progress of all kinds worries Rifkin, but progress in food leaves him especially queasy. The bioengineering of food to make plants more beneficial to humans is something that we have been doing on a hit-or-miss basis for thousands of years, but now that science has figured out how to deliberately alter the genetic makeup of a plant to add or subtract just the