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Professor Etzioni is a well-known and prolific author on subjects ranging from organizational sociology and communitarian philosophy to global affairs. He was named one of the most influential 100 American intellectuals in 2001. This 2014 book is a collection of his essays written between 2006 and 2011 and is the paperback edition of the 2012 book of the same title. It is composed of 22 chapters that include short commentaries on current global affairs as well as articles published in academic journals. The book is divided into eight parts according to the broad themes that the chapters address. The preface, which is the only new piece in the book, declares the objective of the volume as being to “identify the most important challenges faced by American and more generally Western, foreign policy.” Etzioni argues that the foreign policy “hot spots” deserving the greatest US attention are in the Middle East, and in Asia, where the US currently focuses a good deal of its foreign policy efforts. While the main emphasis of the text remains these hot spots, the subtitle of the book, which refers to a “post-human-rights world,” does not appear to be a primary part of Etzioni’s work. The final part of the book is entitled “Human Rights Post 2000,” but the reader is left wondering why human rights need to be treated differently after the year 2000 or how such human rights constitute a “post-human-rights world.”

There are three main themes in the book. A significant portion of the book deals with the geopolitical question of China. Etzioni claims that there are two main perspectives in the American foreign policy thinking on China: Adversarians are those who see China as a significant threat to the US and as a future adversary. Engagers are those who focus on the capabilities of China and conclude that Beijing is on a path to peaceful development and that the US should adopt a policy of engagement. Etzioni positions himself outside of both of these camps and asserts that conflict with China, though not impossible, is very unlikely in the near future. He argues that if engagement policies are adopted, mutual confidence between China and the US can be established, leading to what he calls a policy of Mutually Assured Restraint. This position appears similar to that of the engagers, but Etzioni distinguishes himself from that camp by advising a “generic hedge” regarding the potential for conflict, should it arise. He proposes that the US invest in an expansion of its military capabilities in cyber warfare and that it develop a branch of Special Forces that could be deployed against any future adversary. These efforts, he says, would not lead to a security dilemma between the US and China due to the generic nature of such efforts. This contrasts the suggestions of the Adversarians (who propose, for example, stationing more aircraft carriers in close proximity to China), which, says Etzioni, creates the perception that the US is readying for a war against China, thereby undermining trust and increasing the likelihood of conflict.

Building confidence and maintaining cooperation between China and the US would not only promote US interests in China but would also generate positive outcomes in other regional hot spots, like Pakistan. Etzioni claims that seeing China as an adversary has certain indirect and undesirable effects that make it more difficult to deal with security challenges. Specifically, he asserts, when India is courted as a counterbalance to the rise of China, for example, this courtship undermines the US’s relations with Pakistan, a hot spot of particular significance, believes Etzioni, due not only to its influence over Taliban but also to its nuclear capability. For this reason, Pakistan, asserts Etzioni, must not become estranged from the US, as this would make it much more difficult to keep nuclear weapons from terrorists.

Another major theme in the book is the nature of international security problems in the Middle East. Etzioni argues that the whole of the Middle East is not likely to become a direct adversary of the US; rather, Etzioni locates the “hottest” spot—in terms of the potential

for conflict and folly—in Iran. Of particular concern to Etzioni is the US's misguided attempt to deter Iran from pursuing nuclear arms. Although the US's recent Nuclear Deal with Iran makes his analysis somewhat questionable, Etzioni argues that nuclear deterrence against Iran does not work. Similar to his point on China, and with an air of sociological theorization, Etzioni reminds readers that while individuals are usually divided into rational and irrational actors—with rational actors behaving in ways that are well adapted to meeting their goals and irrational actors behaving in ways that are poorly adapted to do so—there also exists a group of non-rational actors, those who behave in ways that are not in accordance with logic or reason; such actors, says Etzioni, act in response not to logic or reason but to “deeply held beliefs that cannot be proven or disproven.” As such, he asserts, Iran's leaders, being religious fanatics, act not rationally but non-rationally. This means that deterrence, a mechanism that assumes the rationality of actors, cannot be used against Iran and that Iran may strike Israel despite the deterrence measures, believing that helping Palestine is a sacred undertaking. It is curious to observe that the dovish attitude the author displayed against China is nowhere to be found when dealing with the Middle East. He has a quite alarmist tone, arguing without much evidence that Iran has hegemonic *and* militaristic ambitions in the Middle East and that it can attract many US allies such as Egypt and Turkey. Unfortunately, Etzioni fails to consider the linkages between Iran and the Palestine (as he does in the analogous case of China-India-Pakistan triad). The point that Iran is a non-rational actor is demonstrated with the example that Tehran's support for Palestine is not rooted in security interests but religious convictions. However, the weakness of his evidence is quite evident here: Iran's support for Palestine can also be seen as rational given that Israel is seen as a significant threat.

The third major theme that is worthy of consideration is the question of regime change and the American nation-building policy. Etzioni is firmly against any US attempt to facilitate a regime change in the Middle East or elsewhere. As the examples of Iraq and Afghanistan indicate, attempts at regime change or initiatives to build civil societies in authoritarian countries have failed, and such attempts should not be undertaken again, Etzioni says. Etzioni is also very critical of attempts to create any sort of Marshall Plan for the Middle East. In addition to the familiar refrain of the uselessness of foreign aid, Etzioni adds an argument built on seemingly sociological claims regarding the tribal nature of Middle Eastern societies. He argues that tribalism and such divisions in the Middle East make it impossible to implement a scheme like the Marshall Plan. Etzioni, without giving any consideration to the impact of state-building in the Middle East or colonialism and capitalism, cites unexplained “cultural factors” as the main obstacle to the development of the region. In place of evidence, he cites an article from *the Economist*, which found that in Afghanistan, tribalism is one of the factors hindering development.

Etzioni is not a typical realist, who solely advises realpolitik and disregards liberal criticism. He is interested in presenting an argument that has a moral and ethical basis. As such, he does not advocate complete prudentialism in the US's dealings with non-Western countries. To balance moral and foreign policy concerns, he provides a framework in which certain basic principles are considered non-negotiable. He argues that the right to life is the most basic right (understood not as a reference to abortion but to being free from deadly violence, torture, starvation, and slavery). The fundamental character of the right to life is based on the fact that other rights cannot be exercised without the existence of this right. Significantly, Etzioni claims, the moral, political, and other resources necessary for promoting human rights are always limited, and a choice has to be made between the rights. Etzioni uses the metaphor of the market economics, in which there are unlimited needs and limited resources, and a rational decision must be made to satisfy the most significant needs (here, the right to life). His metaphor does not really hold, however, as he puts himself in

place of the central decision-maker in the market by deciding that right to life is the most pressing need, independent of time and place. The status that he accords to himself is similarly evident when he advises human rights NGOs to avoid repairing cleft palates and focus on saving lives. It is striking to observe that Etzioni as a public intellectual is able to make such claims on human rights advocacy without being aware of the impact of such medical conditions on the livelihood of children. In later parts of the book, Etzioni's concern with the right to life transforms into his concern with security. Security provides a more expansive category than human rights, as it is also deployed to support Broken Windows style policing as well as de-proliferation initiatives against the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Defending the right to life requires advocacy of de-proliferation, according to Etzioni, who asserts that the WMD is the biggest threat to human life. However, the fact that Etzioni does not consider small arms (which kill around half a million every year) is puzzling. In short, despite some insight, Etzioni's book would certainly not satisfy the specialist looking for insights informed by recent empirical research. It is nevertheless a useful book not only forgetting a sense of foreign policy debates in the West but also for observing how a scholarly approach can be used to write essays for the general public.

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