

# National Developmentalism: From Forgotten Tradition to New Consensus

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In an article for *American Affairs*, Rob Atkinson and Michael Lind explain why national developmentalism should guide American economic policy at home and abroad.

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In response to the rise of “populism,” members of the Washington establishment have adopted a reassuring way to frame the question of America’s proper relationship to the world. As they see it, Americans are divided into two camps—open or closed, globalist or nationalist, interventionist or protectionist.

If only it were that simple. In reality, five distinct schools with different views of how America should fit into the world economy and govern its own can be identified: global libertarianism, progressive localism, national protectionism, global neoliberalism, and national developmentalism. Each of these contemporary schools of American political economy has its own vision of the good society, expressed in its own preferred combination of policies toward firms, trade, and immigration.

As Rob Atkinson and Michael Lind write in an article for *American Affairs*, national developmentalism is the school which should guide American economic policy at home and abroad. It holds that the key role of the state is to foster industrial and economic development and that international economic policy, including immigration policy, should be crafted to maximize U.S. economic competitiveness.