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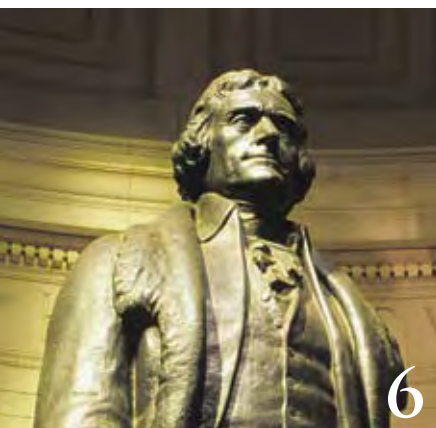
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An Open, Civilized World

Ernest R. May & Philip D. Zelikow

“**O**ur planet is experiencing globalization on an unprecedented scale. Amplified by modern technology, its forces enrich every American community. These forces, however, also endanger our freedom to live as we wish and to preserve the conditions and values we cherish. Humanity needs to harness these forces. Otherwise, they could overwhelm us.

“The United States finds itself at one of those moments when the actions of one nation can shape the future of humankind. Drawing on our rich and varied traditions and putting aside our many differences, we can begin this day to lead the formation of an open, civilized world.”

“An open world is not just one where prosperity can be shared fairly and humanely. It is also one where nations and communities feel that they control their own destinies. A civilized world is one where nations strive to make one another more prosperous and secure, and better able to protect and preserve the resources of our only planet.”

“This is the kind of world where Americans can be truly safe. The government of the United States can have no higher national interest.”

Imagine the next President of the United States saying something like the above. The words acknowledge the challenges facing all humanity. They also respect the dignity of differences among people who must act together. The words include and welcome; they breathe confidence.

Leaders from both parties in Congress applaud. News media the world over echo their approbation. From the froth of debate a firm common purpose emerges. Discourse at home

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and elsewhere focuses on how to achieve an “open, civilized world.”

A Capital-P Policy

This scenario would give the United States once again what we call a “capital-P” Policy. It would be none too soon. Since 1990, the United States has brought to a bewildered, confused, globalizing world a bewildering, confusing mélange of policy ideas. Our politicians and officials talk about terror, democracy, proliferation, trade, the environment, growth and dozens of other topics. They strike a hundred notes, but make no melody.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, policy finds its “chief living sense” as “a course of action adopted and pursued by a government, party, ruler, statesman, etc.; any course of action adopted as advantageous or expedient.” Up to the semicolon, this definition suggests

settled purpose; after the semicolon, it suggests momentary opportunism. Capital-P Policy deserves insertion ahead of both phrases, for it characterizes a course of action so settled as to have a life of its own, and so comprehensive that it shapes both objectives and tactics. Though usually encapsulated in a slogan, a capital-P Policy has a deep underpinning. It embodies widely held views regarding national interests. It also embodies widely accepted axioms about how a nation should behave.

We all recognize the slogans. “No entangling alliances” was the earliest. It endured for almost a century and a half, eventually being buried under the epitaph “isolationism.” It reflected belief that the new nation had two paramount interests: to guard its resources so that time would make it stronger; and to preserve the new union, which could easily tear apart if Americans took opposite sides in a European war. Among the associated axioms were several learned from America’s colonial experience. Time and again, English colonists in North America had seen the home government sacrifice gains in the New World for minor advantages in Europe. They inferred that Old World elites were blinded by hunger for military glory and disdain for mere commerce. By staying out of European wars and trading with all, the New World, in Thomas Jefferson’s phrase, could “fatten on the follies of the Old.”¹

The next American capital-P Policy was Jefferson’s “empire of liberty.” Crystallized in response to the Louisiana Purchase, the Policy said that the United States would grow larger, but only as an expanding commonwealth of equal sovereign states, not as a ruler of dependent colonies.² Then came the Monroe Doctrine, the Open Door and post-World War II International Cooperation. The latter was institutionalized in part in the United Nations but even more in the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization and other specialized agencies, for the core concern was less another World War than another Great Depression.

The most recent Policy, Containment, arose after World War II. During the victory celebrations of 1945, most Americans would have

summed up the nation’s chief postwar interest as avoiding a new interwar era like the 1920s and 1930s. One axiom then was that “appeasement” had been wrongheaded; thus military aggression anywhere should be resisted from the outset. Another axiom equated “totalitarian” with restless aggression; hence any state earning such a label was assumed to be a menace.

All these Policies gave coherence to day-to-day calculations regarding particular problems or countries or regions. For people around the world and for Americans themselves, they illuminated the nation’s purposes and principles. When America did not have a grand Policy, American interests suffered, for, without some broad, unifying definition of national purpose, day-to-day decisions were easy prey for personal or parochial misuse.

Americans and others have often asked, “Does the U.S. even have a foreign policy?”

Many other nations have had capital-P Policies. For Britain, preserving friendship with the United States has been such a Policy for more than a century. The United States, however, has had special need for them because of its peculiar system of government. Shrewdly designed to shield the citizen from the state, America’s separation-of-powers (or sharing-of-powers) enables groups to strike bargains domestically, but makes it hard for any coalition to cause the nation to act as a unit.³ Under the Constitution, the president and Congress share authority to define interests and set programs for action. Neither is supreme, and both sometimes have to reckon with an equally independent Judiciary. The three branches are often also at odds within themselves. Though the president is formally head of the Executive Branch, cabinet departments and other agencies answer to Congress, and it has never been entirely clear which master they would heed. On top of this, the United States undergoes elections every four years with effects that in most other countries come about only through coups or revolutions: The whole top tier of government changes. In most parts of this government, the

protective membrane of institutional memory is thin.⁴

Little wonder, then, that U.S. tactics in international relations have often seemed bewilderingly inconstant and cacophonous. Americans and foreigners have both been prone to ask, “Does the United States *have* a foreign policy?” Only capital-P Policies have been sufficiently durable to justify a clear answer “yes.”

A Pattern

Past Policies have unfolded in three stages. In stage one, the attentive public has come to see one challenge or set of challenges as more important than, or as subsuming, others. There have always been many competitors. Today, contenders for the top spot include terrorism, Iraq, Iran, China, dependence on foreign oil and climate change. After World War II, although there was consensus that the United States should not revert to isolationism, there was little agreement on what that might mean in practice. Eleanor Roosevelt and former Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles called for strengthening the UN, ending colonialism and suppressing fascism’s remnants in Spain and parts of Latin America. General Douglas MacArthur and publisher Henry Luce argued that America should see its future linked with Asia more than Europe. Only slowly did agreement develop that the really big problem was the combination of Soviet expansionism and a Moscow-directed international communist movement—potential aggression by a totalitarian state—and that the immediate U.S. focus needed to be on war-torn Europe.

Stage two, following convergence on the challenge, has seen intense debate over alternative courses of action. During those early post-World War II debates, George Kennan argued persuasively that the most prudent response to Soviet expansionism would be “containment.” Guided by Secretary of State George Marshall and congressional leaders such as ex-isolationist Republican Senate leader Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, President Harry Truman tilted toward this course. But many within Truman’s Democratic Party saw his tilt as being at odds

with Franklin Roosevelt’s Policy of International Cooperation. Running against Truman in 1948 as a third-party candidate, former Vice President Henry Wallace called for a more conciliatory approach to the Soviets. Then, after Truman’s victory and the shock of the Korean War, which seemed to link the Soviet Union and China in an opening salvo for World War III, many pushed for replacing containment with “rollback.” In the subsequent 1952 presidential election, the leading Republican spokesman on foreign affairs, John Foster Dulles, declared containment weak and negative and urged “liberation” instead.

In stage three, the attentive public and political leaders in the Executive Branch and the Congress have crossed party lines and reached consensus in support of a particular approach to the challenge now recognized as paramount. After his inauguration in 1953, Dwight Eisenhower conducted a careful review of all options. With Dulles, now his Secretary of State, he enlisted a galaxy of wise and experienced advisers from both parties, charging them to make the best possible case for each alternative. Containment won. From that time forward, Containment became the settled capital-P Policy, complemented, as the nuclear arms race unfolded, by nuclear deterrence.⁵

All the successful Policies that evolved in this three-stage fashion have had two salient characteristics. They have been realistic in domestic political terms; ordinary Americans have believed that the Policy benefited *them*. And they have been idealistic in that ordinary Americans have seen them also as beneficial to people elsewhere in the world. Thus in the formative phase of Containment, the United States committed itself to the Marshall Plan. In his Harvard commencement address in June 1947, Marshall reviewed the desperate condition of Europe, explaining that all Americans had reason for concern. If Europe collapsed, he said, “the consequences to the economy of the United States should be apparent to all.” He then continued with an appeal to altruism as well as to self-interest:

Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos. Its purpose should



George C. Marshall (I) at Harvard's June 1947 commencement exercises

be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist.

Marshall took this message to Capitol Hill, where the 1946 elections had given Republicans large majorities. He took it to a convention of cotton growers in Atlanta, a Chamber of Commerce in Pittsburgh, a national farmers' organization in Des Moines and leaders in the Federation of Women's Clubs meeting at their national headquarters in Washington. Marshall even made an appeal to a gathering of Maryland Cub Scouts.⁶ Others from the Executive Branch and Congress, and from the business, journalistic and academic communities, appealed to countless such groups from one end of the country to the other. The resulting public support led an extremely conservative (and still somewhat isolationist) Congress to vote enormous sums for economic aid, to be distributed according to formulas developed by the European recipients themselves. Containment had passed the test.

Post-Cold War Drift

Though often and falsely set up as opposing schools of thought, notions of realism and idealism are bound together in any large Policy, as the genes of a father and mother are bound together in the chromosomes of their child. A good test for the viability of a new Policy would be to ask if its particular mixture balances credible effectiveness with broad popular support. Since the end of the Cold War, no proposed Policy has passed that test.

The elder George Bush spoke in 1990 of a "new world order." Defeated in his bid for a second term, he could never fill in the blanks. Former Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott has written that President Bill Clinton complained to his advisers about the lack of "a slogan for where we are and what we're doing and why, and where it's going to take us that's better than where we've been." Talbott says that Vice President Al Gore agreed but declared the problem larger than the past. "People now feel in their bones", said Gore, "that there's something fundamentally different about the world

in which we live.”⁷ If Clinton and Gore ever had a chance of making these perceptions the basis for a new Policy, it came to naught amid early reverses, tangled Balkan conflicts and squalid partisan battles that tailed off only as the country began to reconcile itself to the Supreme Court’s resolution of the disputed election of 2000.⁸

The second George Bush took office mostly focused on what not to do: “nation-building”, for example. Then came 9/11, after which the President proclaimed a “global war on terror”, which the Pentagon predictably turned into the acronym GWOT (pronounced “gee-watt”). The President and his aides tried to set the GWOT in a larger framework by publishing a new “national security strategy” in September 2002. But the GWOT was put to partisan use in the midterm elections that year. The looming Iraq war afterward divided Congress and the public, rendering moot any serious debate about the proposed strategy.⁹

The post-2004 Bush Administration redoubled its effort to find a Policy, now emphasizing a “freedom agenda.” But this agenda also failed to win broad support, partly because no presidential doctrine can enjoy a better reputation than the small-p policies that exemplify it. Containment had the Marshall Plan, the Berlin Airlift and NATO. The “freedom agenda” had the bloody and seemingly indecisive war in Iraq. The opportunity of 2001–02 vanished as had those of 1991–92 and 1993–94.

Scores of scholars, journalists and former officials have advanced arguments as to how the United States should try to manage the post-Cold War world. We have heard calls for “realistic Wilsonianism”, “ethical realism”, “multi-multilateralism”, “progressive realism”, “progressive internationalism” and many more besides. Projects, commissions, conferences, colloquia and books have advocated specific courses of action for the U.S. government. We ourselves have learned much from these writings. None, however, seems to us to pass the necessary tests. None defines a challenge ample enough to arouse concern among farmers in Georgia and Iowa, business leaders in Pennsylvania, or women’s club presidents around the country. None proposes courses of action that such audiences are likely to see as good for

them *and* for the world. The reason, we think, is that even the most thoughtful among these efforts focus on means or processes more than they look to ends. None digs deeply enough into the core problem, which is a lack of clarity about the problem itself.

Globalization vs. Self-Determination

We believe that the challenge of today, which matches the great challenges of the past, is the inevitable tension, worldwide and in the United States itself, between globalization and self-determination.

“Globalization” is too new a term for the *Oxford English Dictionary*, and most other dictionaries are not much help in finding a useful definition. We all sense that the word says something about an increase in the speed and scope of economic transactions combined with a meshing of economies, societies and cultures—Toyota on American highways, Coca Cola on tables in Europe and Asia—but we also sense that it is more than a sum of transactions. The Swiss historian Jürgen Osterhammel distinguishes as globalization’s three chief components:

- an “expansion, concentration, and acceleration of worldwide relations [which] challenges the importance of the nation-state and alters the balance of power between states and markets in favor of the latter”;
- “influence on everything covered by the rubric of ‘culture’ [with] concurrent . . . homogenization and heterogenization”; and
- “a fundamental change of the categories of time and space [which] geographer David Harvey calls . . . ‘space-time compression.’”¹⁰

Whatever it is, globalization is outside the experience of most people living today. Like most novel phenomena, it generates anxiety as well as hope. Though polls show majorities in most countries agreeing that economic globalization has been beneficial, pollsters get decidedly mixed results when they ask more generally whether people “have positive or negative views about globalization.” In half a

dozen wealthy countries, the answers to the second question were uniformly negative. Except in Germany, the results were not even close. In America, about 18 percent had a positive view of globalization; 48 percent were negative; the rest were unsure. In Britain, the negatives outnumbered the positives by more than three to one.¹¹

These are not just responses to outsourcing or job loss. Rather, negative reactions to globalization arise from often inchoate fears about individual and community identities being swept away by forces beyond human control, possibly even beyond human understanding. Scholars have found that as traditional sources of geographical, religious and clan identities weaken, people create “imagined communities” to provide a sense of collective belonging, social kinship and help against threatening others.¹² Sometimes newly imagined or newly emphasized communities form below the level of the state. At present, ethnic, religious and other groups are hiving off as independent nations, or trying to do so—Kosovars, Macedonians, Basques, Kurds, Tibetans and others. But that is only a partial indicator. Within nations, autonomous urban and regional entities increasingly assert their own identities. Shanghai, São Paulo and Mumbai are global players in their own right. Modern communications, particularly the Internet, make it possible for people to form imagined communities—among diaspora ethnic or sectarian groups, for example—even when geographically scattered.¹³

“Self-determination” is more easily defined. It expresses the ambition of people in real or imagined communities to keep their own traditions and values, to pursue happiness in their own ways, and to feel in control of their own destinies. A preference for democracy sometimes accompanies the ambition for self-determination, but not always. In any event, democratic hopes have usually been a form of the phenomenon, not the thing itself.

Self-determination prompts buffeted communities to try to protect themselves, mostly through the exercise of national or local political power—by subsidies, taxes or regulations discriminating against outsiders. Such measures may ameliorate problems, but they cannot cure them, for each community is part of a

global web in which strain on any one thread, anywhere, causes threads elsewhere to tremble or snap. Because the discriminatory measures often provide temporary relief, citizens call for more when the relief abates. They are, to shift the metaphor, like patients demanding ever-increasing dosages of painkillers.

While globalization and self-determination are evident enough, what is less obvious is how these phenomena act reciprocally, like summer heat and thunderstorms. Uncontrolled flows of money, goods, people and ideas interacting with local ways of life can generate tremendous explosions. In the 19th century, for example, efficient use of new sources of energy, combined with new technologies and new institutions for finance, manufacture, transportation and communication, transformed established customs and commerce in Europe and the Americas. Capital went almost anywhere it could be put to profitable use, from Wyoming to Patagonia. Millions upon millions of workers moved from countryside to town, from one nation to another, and across the sea. Banks and firms competing across national boundaries often seemed more omnipresent and powerful than states.¹⁴

While this earlier era of globalization produced large and obvious benefits for people and communities in every part of the world, particularly the United States, it stimulated vigorous assertions of communal identity, whether surging nationalism or ethnic and religious movements. The combustion of these processes produced phases of intense political upheaval and massive violence, like the revolts during the middle of the 19th century that rippled across Europe and the parts of India and China where the European presence was strong.¹⁵ A century ago, when most of his contemporaries had assured themselves that the ferment was temporary, the Boston Brahmin intellectual, Henry Adams, predicted that the tempo of change was such as soon “to tip thought upside down.” He warned: “Law, in that case, would disappear as theory or *a priori* principle, and give place to force. Morality would become police. Explosives would reach cosmic violence. Disintegration would overcome integration.”¹⁶ We think that foresight like Adams’s is needed today.

Some of the commotion then was traceable

to the displacement or exploitation of workers, but more intangible stakes were at issue than those found at the pay table. Identities and beliefs were threatened. Communities seemed to atomize, especially in fast-growing, alienating cities. Ties of tribe, clan and family weakened. People newly come to nationalism thought their nations in danger. Ancient faiths found competitors not only from new denominations but from science and secularism as well.

Stoked by a new world of available print information, anxieties translated into political movements. Even those that were nominally about protecting workers or farmers were really more than that, offering new communities of belief and comradeship. Concern for national or ethnic identity led to efforts to restrict immigration or force conformity. In the United

A heedless or self-absorbed America could end up failing to lead the world away from catastrophe.

States, such efforts produced national legislation that overtly discriminated against Asians and set tight quotas to keep people out if they were not Protestants from western or northern Europe. States and localities meanwhile introduced compulsory public school curricula to inculcate “Americanism.”

Friction between cosmopolitan internationalism and national, ethnic and racial assertion became a constant theme in European and Asian politics, too. In 1914, many ordinary Germans went to war believing they were fighting to preserve old ideals of culture and honor against the impersonal, dehumanizing forces they associated with British commercialism. The British, meanwhile, marched off with the conviction that civilization faced the onslaught of a new horde of Huns.¹⁷ Ideologues developed creeds to exploit and mobilize these beliefs. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, bomb-throwing anarchists inspired fear comparable to that inspired by today’s Islamist extremists. Revolutionary socialists like Lenin condemned trade-union socialists who obeyed the rules. Fascists called for a different kind of discipline and order.

To see how such broad trends can form an explosive compound, consider the crisis of July 1914, which led to the First World War. At the time, the general view among thoughtful people and shrewd bettors putting their money in bond markets was that economic, technological and moral progress had probably rendered a general war obsolete. In late June, a group of seven suicidal terrorists deployed themselves to murder the Austrian archduke, Franz Ferdinand. They were Bosnians, Croats and Serbs urged on by Serbian and Russian officials, intellectuals and priests identified with a pan-Slav movement. In Austria-Hungary, generals and political leaders demanded that this shocking act of state-sponsored terrorism should be the occasion for a reckoning with the belligerent new Serbian state. In Berlin

and St. Petersburg, other generals and political leaders bullied their monarchs into war, partly motivated, we now believe, by concern

that continued peace would erode the existing distribution of social status and economic and political power.¹⁸

In prior crises, Great Britain had intervened to cool the hotheads. In this crisis, it did not do so. Though the strongest and most stable of the powers, Britain was utterly preoccupied with problems closer to home, notably the possibility of civil war resulting from religious and nationalist passions in Ulster and Ireland.

To recite this history is not to suggest that the precise pattern of the past will or could repeat itself. But we do think that the underlying social forces that created the predicates for political upheaval and military catastrophe about a century ago are with us once more. The fate of 19th-century globalization should evoke in us a sense of how globalization and self-determination inevitably clash with one another and how the clash, if not carefully minded, can generate uncontrollable effects. We also suggest that just as Britain in 1914 failed to play the role for which it was best suited, so now a heedless or totally self-absorbed America could deny the world the leadership needed to fend off potential catastrophe. That

is why we need a new Policy that recognizes the dangers of our time and offers a practical agenda to defuse them.

A Closer Look at the Challenge

Globalization and self-determination interact today in ways we scarcely grasp. One reason is that today many different communities at many levels, within and beyond the state, can make decisions, under their own rules, that can then produce rapid consequences on other continents. A flutter in ocean freight rates or in world prices for fertilizer or feed can send farmers in Spain or Morocco to the edge of bankruptcy. Cavalier lending policies for American home mortgages can cause a credit crunch that cuts off loans to small businessmen throughout the European Community.

Such interdependence is not entirely new, of course. In 1931, a financial crisis in Austria, following the collapse of a Vienna bank, set off ripples that delivered the *coup de grâce* to that generation's model of financial globalization. But the scope of interdependence today is new. Small countries and political communities usually benefit from peaceful globalization, because they do not thrive under the law of the jungle. But the asymmetry between small governments and stakeholding in a large, interdependent system can create a governance gap, as when troubled Icelandic banks, once favored as offshore depositories, find themselves holding jeopardized assets ten times larger than the GDP of their home country.¹⁹ The legal philosopher Philip Bobbitt gives another example of the potential interaction:

More than 140 million persons enter the U.S. by air every year; the flight time between their ports of departure and arrival is seldom more than twenty-four hours. Yet diseases such as plague and smallpox have incubation times ranging from three days to two weeks.²⁰

What these and other examples suggest is that the gap between large stakes and weak, fragmented governance can only be closed by common action among states. Former British

Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd neatly sums up the central dilemma:

The world is run on a paradox. On the one hand, the essential focus of loyalty remains the nation state and there are nearly two hundred of these. On the other hand, no nation state, not even the single superpower the United States of America, is capable of delivering to its citizens single-handedly the security, the prosperity and the decent environment which the citizens demand.²¹

Fortunately, some of the world's best minds have become seized by this paradox. Harvard economist and former U.S. Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers has devoted columns in the *Financial Times* to the proposition that governments must temper globalization with measures to soften the impact on groups that experience the short-term effects as harmful. When free-traders criticized his position as heretical, Summers responded that he is "only suggesting a domestic strategy that emphasizes inclusive prosperity and an international strategy that calls for more global cooperation to assure that it is still possible to pursue the necessary objectives of social insurance and economic regulation."²²

Political scientist Joseph Nye has itemized global "public goods" that affect the well-being both of Americans and of people elsewhere.²³ (His list overlaps in part with the agenda we outline below.) At the request of French President Nicholas Sarkozy, two Nobel laureate economists, Joseph Stiglitz and Amartya Sen, have worked on an index to show, as Sen puts it, that "there is more to human progress than aggregate statistics of growth."²⁴ Instead of something like a two-dimensional scorecard for a win-lose game, they may give us the equivalent of the kind of synoptic chart that enables doctors to gauge a patient's health.

This is critical, for two-dimensional analyses no longer suit our circumstances. The challenge that produced Containment was in large part military in nature. Partly because the United States had deliberately chosen during World War II to minimize ground-force expansion in favor of building up air forces and developing an atomic bomb, the Soviets

seemed to have an immense advantage if there were to be a new ground war anywhere in the Eurasian land mass.²⁵ The dilemma for the U.S. government was how to discourage the Soviets from exploiting that advantage, to give those living under U.S. protection some confidence in their safety, and at the same time to avoid arousing active fear in Moscow that the United States might take advantage of its preponderance in strategic air power. In constantly changing circumstances, Containment, with the complement of nuclear deterrence, required close calibration of the interplay between diplomacy and military strategy, deployments and procurement.

The challenge of trying to reconcile globalization with self-determination does not call for comparable reliance on military force. To say this is not to argue, even implicitly, for a new post-Iraq stab at a “peace dividend.” The challenges of the future are unpredictable. Though military conflict among major powers may seem at present a chimera imagined by dogmatic international relations theorists, it is worth remembering that, as late as 1930, a broad, nearly worldwide consensus held that war had become obsolete. The U.S. stock market crash of 1929 and its ripples elsewhere seemed a blip. Stock values were said to have stabilized simply with the “speculative hot air” taken out. Even Winston Churchill, certainly no delusional pacifist, said in that year on a visit to Canada that “the outlook for peace has never been better than for fifty years.”²⁶ Ten years later, World War II was underway, with Prime Minister Churchill warning of possible battles on Britain’s beaches and landing fields, and of the British government’s possible flight to Canada to continue the war. Oliver Cromwell’s admonition to “keep your powder dry” and Theodore Roosevelt’s about keeping a “big stick” on hand are as relevant as ever.

Nevertheless, if we are right that the preponderant challenge of the near future rises from the tension between globalization and self-determination, U.S. military programs are unlikely to have the same centrality as during the Cold War. And it also seems less obvious now than it did after World War II that the right forum for figuring out how to deal with specific international problems should be a National Security Council structured

primarily to harmonize the Departments of State and Defense.

Five Core Principles

Albert Schweitzer wondered in 1923 how the world could possibly restore some hope for civilization after the horrible carnage of the Great War. He began with the observation that “we have drifted out of the stream of civilization because there was amongst us no real reflection upon what civilization is.”²⁷ Indeed, only by putting the commitment to a “civilized” world at the center of its foreign policy can the United States foster such reflection. The term “civilized” has baggage of its own, of course, but the concept of civilization has a long history of acceptance not only in the West but throughout Asia. We believe that a broad consensus can form on five normative elements inherent in the goal of an open, civilized world.

The first is *respect for the identities of others*. Modern life has separated people from their traditional roots, so they work hard to define their identity in communities. Every individual has gender, ethnicity and certain physical categories, ties of place, recognizable beliefs, an occupation and avocations or enthusiasms, any one or any combination of which the individual may consider primary. A durable, resilient global framework should tolerate elective pluralism. It should grant people and communities the space they want and need to make self-determination meaningfully consistent with their civic duties to government and to each other.

The United States comes as close as any large country in the world to exemplifying this principle. It can still do better, and, more through private efforts than through government, Americans can be examples to others. The U.S. news media and U.S. officials can criticize publicly regimes that abuse their own people. In particularly awful cases, the U.S. government might join others in remedial action. But little in our own history or that of any other society suggests that respect for the identities of others can be induced by coercion. Witness the fact that in our own country, the North’s victory in the Civil War, followed by 12 years of military

occupation of the former Confederacy, was in this dimension a total failure. It took a hundred years of evolution within the South itself before African-Americans were accorded the respect that Yankee armies thought they had won for them by force of arms.

The second core principle of an open, civilized world is *cooperative prosperity*. The globalization of the world economy in the last generation has yielded massive benefits from specialization and exchange. The era since 1950, write the great historians William and John McNeill, “is the most unusual in the history of economic growth [in all of human history], although many people, having experienced nothing else, now imagine it is normal.”²⁸ Of course, this growth was spurred by competition and has provided constant proof of Joseph Schumpeter’s argument that a prerequisite for economic improvement is “creative destruction”—of crafts, trades, firms, even whole industries.

Most if not all societies participating in globalization have grown richer, but not necessarily as rich as others. So even amid a general rise in prosperity there have been losers (and those who think themselves losers) in a new order. We know what harm the *déclassé* individual or the revanchist state can cause. Self-determination carried to the extreme of either separation or militant governmental action to despoil others is the enemy of both civil and international society.

The commitment to cooperative prosperity is therefore necessary as a commitment both to openness and to the international cooperation required to sustain it. The earlier era of globalization had very weak structures for international economic cooperation, mainly relying on private firms and a few governments to maintain the gold standard. Before and after 1914, those structures could do nothing to check the impulse of powerful countries to seize and close off access to resources and markets. Even the gold standard itself became an anachronistic anchor that did more to cause and deepen the Great Depression than to stop or slow it. The principle of cooperative prosperity says

that openness is preserved by positive action; a reliance on market forces alone is not enough.

The third core principle is that of *mutual security*. In a civilized world, states cannot secure themselves by making other states insecure. Much of the 20th century was dominated by a march toward conquest by countries that adopted mutations of “social Darwinism” as a kind of secular religion that suffused their thinking about domestic life as well. For such states and ideologies, the life of their nation was a struggle for survival of the fittest. War was natural and inevitable. The purpose of life was to prepare for the struggle in order to prevail. Reliance on others was weakness.

Fortunately, the governments most dedicated to the principle of the survival of the fittest did not in fact survive. But they brought civi-

The preservation of an open, civilized world rests on the common ability to manage planetary health.

lization to the brink of ruin, not just by their own acts but also by what the victors needed to do in order to prevail.²⁹ Though the phrase “mutual security” may call to mind either euphemisms of the Cold War or the extravagant optimism of theorists (like Norman Angell then and John Mueller now) who posit the obsolescence of war, we must remember that the ghastly violence of the 20th century depended on large populations convinced that their security could only be achieved by destruction or conquest, even at great cost to themselves. So cooperative prosperity and mutual security are reciprocal principles.

The fourth core principle of an open, civilized world is *stewardship of the planet*. For more than a century, beginning in British India and the United States, civilized societies have recognized their own interest in refraining from using up their natural resources. As globalization resumed and expanded in the second half of the 20th century, economic and technological forces expanded the concept of one’s “own interest” to encompass the planet. Measuring human effects on the global environment across a number of major variables,

scientists now say that “more change occurred in the forty years from 1945 to 1985 than had occurred in the previous 10,000 years.”³⁰ And the pace of change has accelerated with the onset of full globalization.

There is thus no hyperbole in stating that preservation of an open, civilized world rests on the common ability to manage planetary health, including issues like the diminishing availability of fresh water, arable land, fossil fuels and the resources of the world’s oceans. Our society and others have devoted enormous resources to managing risks much more modest than the ones now becoming evident. Not only do we have a great deal to do to become responsible stewards, but we also need to devise new cooperative mechanisms among societies to enable our efforts to succeed.

The fifth principle is *limited government*. In the current era of world politics, the character of any state’s domestic governance can spill over into international life. The reason is that a government’s conceptions of its own political and national life animate its external as well as its domestic behaviors. Indeed, many transnational challenges confronting us today issue from a series of essentially domestic choices, whether about definitions of crime and terrorism or orientations to public health, energy use and environmental policy.

It is legitimate, then, to include some notion of how others govern themselves as an element of an American Policy seeking an open, civilized world. We think the criterion of “limited government” gets close to the heart of legitimate concern for the governance of other countries. The century just past offers many examples of how governments claiming unlimited power at home tend to justify themselves and nurture pathologies that endanger those abroad. This criterion focuses on respect for the way people and communities attain some measure of self-determination, the room given to individuality and enterprise, and the boundaries set to limit the statist “rent-seeking” that can corrupt officialdom and degrade capacities for constructive action.

Coping with globalization calls upon governments to improve their administrative capacities and in some respects to become stronger. The principle of limited government

serves as a corrective corollary, yet there are many ways to check governmental power without sacrificing the capacity to address large problems or cope with emergencies. The rule of law and democratic accountability are only two. Others (which happen to figure centrally in the political development of the United States) include the separation of overlapping powers at one level of government and the judicious allocation of central and local power. One recent illustration of creative thinking about how to balance the goal of limited but effective government is an intriguing blueprint for political reform just published (and not censored, at least not yet) by some daring scholars at the very center of China’s cadre training, the Central Party School.³¹

A New Agenda

After the 2008 elections, the new president and leaders in the new Congress will have to attend to unfinished business, including ongoing wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. They will also want to reintroduce America to the world. Words that offer a unifying sense of America’s purpose should be the foundation of these endeavors. But we also want to illustrate how the ideal of an open, civilized world can drive a governmental agenda different from the one we have now. We offer five illustrations of this difference on a conceptual level, with the understanding that both political and analytical hurdles remain before most of our proposals can be implemented.

Each of our examples of what might constitute a new Policy agenda begins by positing the need for a serious international dialogue about the tensions and positive opportunities of a globalizing world. Our own and other nations’ debates about immigration, industrial or agricultural subsidies, measures for worker protection, or product safety regulation ought at least to be informed by knowledge of actual or prospective effects in other societies. This is a dialogue that should be conducted by congressional leaders and governors as well as the traditional representatives of the Executive Branch.

Develop new frameworks for global capital and business. For nearly two centuries, the international economic agenda has been devoted to building structures for trade and exchange among states and essentially national firms. Over the past quarter century, however, a substantially unregulated international capital market has grown out of the wreckage of the old Bretton Woods system. As the United States works through a major crisis of this new system, its regulators are struggling to find ways to improve our understanding of the instruments being traded, and to set capital and other requirements for financial institutions that cannot be allowed to fail.³² Trillions of dollars are being accumulated by sovereign wealth funds, and again national regulators struggle to facilitate investment without letting the investors play different jurisdictions against each other.

Meanwhile, the time when a multinational corporation was essentially a national firm with foreign operations is giving way to a world of truly global corporations. Complex transnational supply and retail chains now defy categorization under national labels. Firms confront a blizzard of different laws and rules, while gaps and inconsistencies in regulatory standards pose unprecedented dangers to consumers. In such circumstances, criminals can thrive, and national tax authorities are often befuddled, with the result that ever more of the profits of globalization end up in the hands of those with no sense of obligation to the common welfare. Wise global businessmen would prefer a foundation of stronger global regulatory cooperation to supplant the patchwork of investment rules, product standards and competition policies they now must sort out in order to operate around the world. Such a foundation would rebuild the confidence of citizens that their health and safety will be protected.³³

Develop programs to protect global public order, with terrorism as one facet of a wider problem of transnational criminal networks. Extremists such as those responsible for 9/11, or those who televise the beheading of infidels, help to define civilized behavior by illustrating its opposite: barbarism. A civilized

world must unite against such extremists and see that, like pirates, they are deemed by every government to be *hostis humani generis*, enemies of humankind.

But for all the publicity terrorists have won in recent years, they make up only a fraction of the forces that threaten global public order. Mafias of one kind or another control segments even of generally civilized countries such as Italy and Russia. Gang lords ruling parts of Central America regularly commute to strongholds in southern California. Mexico seems on the brink of a strange, new kind of civil war, with the national armed forces pitted against those of drug cartels. While the GWOT has registered some success against Islamist terrorists, existing ideas and capabilities have not yet begun to rein in

Terrorists make up only a fraction of the forces that threaten global public order.

the rise and spread of organized crime. Even in the GWOT, the United States needs to keep building a much better moral and legal foundation for common action in gathering intelligence and dealing with captives.³⁴ And we have not successfully regularized the exchange of information. The world does a better job tracking lost credit cards than lost passports.

Improve international management of increasingly available ultra-hazardous materials and technologies. Traditional national security agendas rightly concentrate on the threat posed by the diffusion of nuclear weapon capabilities. Less apparent, so far, is the development of new technologies like genetic manipulation and nanotechnology that can be turned to ultra-hazardous uses. Radical Islamist terrorists are not the only enemies we need worry about. Other barbarians, including homegrown examples like Timothy McVeigh and Ted “the Unabomber” Kaczynski, might also seek immortality through dramatic use of such weapons. Crime syndicates, too, might use such weapons for extortion.

Some capabilities should be banned, as

happened in the largely successful global effort to eliminate germ weapons nearly forty years ago. Other approaches might try to harness ultra-hazardous materials through international management of the most dangerous components. To get an idea of how such management techniques might work, we would do well to review ideas for the international control of nuclear materials broached more than a half century ago by officials working for Harry Truman, *The Acheson-Lilienthal Report on the International Control of Atomic Energy*. Prepared and approved by all the principal builders of the original atomic bomb, the plan did not rely on a ban or inspections. Instead, it developed an innovative, practical approach for international management of certain indispensable nuclear raw materials. Renewing that effort and perhaps enlarging it to deal with biological weapons materials would be especially auspicious now, given the likelihood that world demand for energy will generate an order-of-magnitude increase in the number of new nuclear plants. U.S. scientists and the U.S. intelligence community have recently found new measures for gauging from outside the walls of such facilities what is being generated within them, so the technical means to monitor new agreements appear to be in hand.³⁵

The key point is to recognize that no one country can effectively manage the diffusion of ultra-hazardous materials and technologies in today's world. Nor can any one country develop institutions that can enable vital but dangerous innovations to attain their full potential for the advancement of humanity.

Develop a global framework for local choices about how to reduce the world's dangerous reliance on oil and dirty coal. World oil supply is already moving toward a state of deep, continuous crisis. Current trends in use of oil and dirty coal also threaten the planet itself. The risks already justify accepting substantial burdens in order to assign a more accurate price to the costs of using carbon.³⁶

All major proposals for dealing with the energy/environment dilemmas require a global framework with wide participation, very much including China. But energy and environmental issues are too varied to be handled with a

rigid regime of global controls. The challenge is to create a global structure that allows ample scope for local choices and implementation. The challenge has not yet been met. In the climate change area—a good example because it has already received much attention—international cap and trade schemes will not achieve their potential gains unless arcane but critical designs for international offsets and carbon credits can be perfected.³⁷

*Fashion a program of inclusive, sustainable development for the fifty or so nations making up the "bottom billion."*³⁸ In an October 2007 address, World Bank president Bob Zoellick began to sketch an actionable plan. If U.S. leaders respond, they must take account of the synergy between four elements: public-order deficits that deny weak states a chance to take off; local governance and infrastructure gaps that separate the poorest people from the otherwise available tools, knowledge and resources that could transform their lives; global inability to combat trends that may limit and threaten the inputs poor people need for development, above all energy and water; and global inability to adjust world food production and markets for the 21st century's more interdependent structure.

Is America Up to the Challenge?

We raised in passing the question of whether a White House national security apparatus suited for the Cold War is the right one to plan and oversee action in a world characterized less by military threats than by the multidimensional challenges arising out of the nexus of globalization and self-determination. Having limned some of the daunting agenda involved in meeting such a challenge, we close with a few observations about our own government's structure and processes.

The five agenda items sketched above require that the president and congressional leaders collaborate as they have rarely collaborated in the memory of even the oldest Washington watchers. If any part of the agenda we have sketched is to move forward, the years beginning with 2009 must in these respects begin to resemble those of 1947–49, when President

Truman and congressional leaders genuinely worked together, and when Secretary of State Marshall and others understood the need to engage the American people in a serious and ongoing conversation about the future of the country.

This agenda also requires coordinated action among Executive Branch agencies, some of which are hard pressed to coordinate their own actions, let alone to work in tandem with others. In addition to State and Treasury, ramshackle Departments such as Homeland Security and Energy, together with walled-in Departments such as Agriculture and Labor, will have to become much more involved in cooperative planning and policy implementation. This will only happen if the White House, the stronger Executive Departments and the authorizing and appropriating committees of Congress insist on it.

The new president and leaders in Congress also need to think hard about how to connect what they decide to do with what they say. Until the 1970s, presidents dealing with major international issues tended not to separate decision-making from speechwriting. During the 13-day Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, President Kennedy and his inner circle (the “ExComm”) concentrated on what to do, on how to explain the decisions to the American public and allies and adversaries abroad, and then on how to act so as to align programs, promises and performance.³⁹ They all served as both planners and speechwriters. From the Carter Administration onward, however, White House speechwriting has increasingly seemed like an autonomous activity akin to marketing in a large corporation. If there is to be a new Policy and if it is to be translated into action, the craft of explaining the Policy to America and the world will be as much a part of choice and implementation as was the case in the early years of Containment and during those harrowing days of October 1962.

What we have described here may seem to some too difficult even to attempt. But those who take that view should reflect on what is really at stake. Our central contention is that a new social and political dynamic defined by the globalization-and-self-

determination nexus is creating conditions for a major systemic crisis, one of such magnitude as to evoke memories of the most turbulent and violent phases of modern history. In that earlier era, as a result of greed, parochialism, excessive optimism and inattention, self-determination triumphed in toxic forms that eventually cost hundreds of millions of lives and scarred the very conscience of humanity. Agreement to seek an open, civilized world would gather Americans around an agenda animated by the most venerable American political tradition of them all: hope and confidence in a future that can be molded by the will of free people everywhere. Reintroducing America to the world, such an agenda could revive a sense of national purpose, reorient our government, and energize the languishing apparatus of international cooperation. 🌐

Endnotes

¹See Felix Gilbert, *To the Farewell Address: Ideas of Early American Foreign Policy* (Princeton University Press, 1970).

²See Robert W. Tucker and David C. Hendrickson, *Empire of Liberty: The Statecraft of Thomas Jefferson* (Oxford University Press, 1990) and Peter S. Onuf, *Jefferson's Empire: The Language of American Nationhood* (University Press of Virginia, 2000).

³Two generations of U.S. historians have pretty much left in ruins the myth that the United States has had a *laissez-faire* tradition. In fact, from the colonial era forward, government at all levels has intervened energetically to foster economic growth and to help individual sectors and firms. See William J. Novak, “The Myth of the ‘Weak American State’”, *American Historical Review* (April 2008). But most of this government activity results from log-rolling that balances the interests of certain constituencies against those of others. What the system effectively blocks is concerted national action.

⁴The United States still remains in some respects a confederation of sovereign states. States still devise their own foreign policy sanctions: Massachusetts went to the Supreme Court to defend unsuccessfully its sanctions against

Burma; California has made its own move to halt the Iraq war.

- ⁵See Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (Oxford University Press, 1998); and John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War* (Oxford University Press, 2005).
- ⁶See Forrest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Statesman, 1945–1959* (Viking, 1987), pp. 237–57.
- ⁷Talbot, *The Great Experiment* (Simon & Schuster, 2008), pp. 327–29.
- ⁸Derek Chollet & James Goldgeier, *America Between the Wars: From 11/9 to 9/11* (Public Affairs, 2008).
- ⁹Discussion of the Bush Administration's 2002 articulation of its grand strategy was swallowed by the debate over the Iraq war because its discussion of preemption was seen (mistakenly) as a rationalization for that war. Zelikow helped draft the 2002 strategy document. The language on preemption was drafted in the first months of 2002 mainly as a reaction to the perceived lesson of Afghanistan-9/11, not with future operations against Iraq in mind. Much of the 2002 strategy document embodies propositions that are neither radical nor partisan. For an elaboration, see Zelikow, "The Transformation of National Security", *The National Interest* (Spring 2003). Even the passage on preemption has been echoed by none other than Senator Barack Obama, who has written: "This century's threats are at least as dangerous and in some ways more complex than those we have confronted in the past. They come from weapons that can destroy on a mass scale and from global terrorists who respond to alienation or perceived injustice with murderous nihilism. They come from rogue states allied to terrorists and from rising powers that could challenge both America and the international foundation of liberal democracy. They come from weak states that cannot control their territory or provide for their people. . . . I will not hesitate to use force, unilaterally if necessary, to protect the American people or our vital interests whenever we are attacked or imminently threatened." Obama, "Renewing America's Leadership", *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2007).
- ¹⁰Jürgen Osterhammel and Niels P. Peterson, *Globalization: A Short History* (Princeton University Press, 2005), pp. 5–8, citing David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Blackwell, 1989). As Osterhammel notes, there is no consensus about when these phenomena emerged in combination. Some think today's "network society" is unprecedented. Some argue that, on the contrary, all human history has been marked by multiplication and integration of social and informational networks. See Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society, The Information Age: Economy, Society, and Culture*, vol. 1 (Blackwell, 2d ed. 2000) for the first view and, for the second view, J. R. McNeill and William H. McNeill, *The Human Web: A Birds-Eye View of World History* (W.W. Norton, 2003).
- ¹¹Chris Giles, "Poll reveals backlash in wealthy countries against globalization", *Financial Times*, July 23, 2007. For the widespread recognition that economic globalization has been beneficial, see the Pew Global Attitudes Survey of 2003, pewglobal.org/reports.
- ¹²On the way modernization influences how people and governments construct large, new identities, see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso, 2006).
- ¹³See, for example, Bill Bishop with Robert G. Cushing, *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America Is Tearing Us Apart* (Houghton Mifflin, 2008).
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- ¹⁵See C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914* (Blackwell, 2004).
- ¹⁶Adams to Henry Osborn Taylor, January 17, 1905, in Ernest Samuels, ed., *Henry Adams: Selected Letters* (Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 451–2.
- ¹⁷See Niall Ferguson, *The War of the World: Twentieth-Century Conflict and the Descent of the West* (Penguin, 2006). The beliefs of 1914 are nicely distilled in Hew Strachan, "The Ideas of 1914", in *The First World War: Volume*

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- ¹⁸See Samuel R. Williamson, Jr., and Ernest R. May, “An Identity of Opinion: Historians and July 1914”, *Journal of Modern History* (June 2007).
- ¹⁹See Harold James, “The Future of Globalization: A Transatlantic Perspective”, Foreign Policy Research Institute E-Note, June 2008.
- ²⁰Bobbitt, *Terror and Consent: The Wars for the Twenty-first Century* (Knopf, 2008).
- ²¹Quoted in Bobbitt, *Terror and Consent*.
- ²²Summers, “America Needs to Make a New Case for Trade”, *Financial Times*, April 27, 2008; “A Strategy to Promote Healthy Globalisation”, *Financial Times*, May 4, 2008; and “Economists’ Forum”, *Financial Times*, May 19, 2008.
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- ²⁷Schweitzer, *The Decay and Restoration of Civilization: Part I—The Philosophy of Civilization* (Prometheus, 1987).
- ²⁸McNeill and McNeill, *The Human Web*, p. 310.
- ²⁹For example, by deciding to kill enemy workers as well as destroy their factories in leveling cities from the air, a controversial topic ably and dispassionately summarized in Richard Overy, “Allied Bombing and the Destruction of German Cities”, in Roger Chickering, Stig Förster, and Bernd Greiner, eds., *A World at Total War* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 277–95. Bobbitt, in *Terror and Consent*, p. 12, makes the point that, despite extraordinary improvement in the precise aiming of weaponry, the 20th century saw a near reversal in the ratio between military and civilian casualties. By century’s end, 80 percent of the dead and wounded were civilians.
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- ³¹See Chris Buckley, “Elite China think-tank issues political reform blueprint”, Reuters, February 18, 2008.
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