

G A R Y H A R T

# The Fourth Power

A Grand Strategy for the United States  
in the Twenty-First Century \* \* \*

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superiority but recognize its increasing dependence on skillful human direction. And homeland security must achieve a balance between security and liberty by constant recognition of our peculiar constitutional heritage and the mandate that heritage provides to rely on citizens and citizen-soldiers devoted to civic virtue and civic duty.

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## Who We Are

### Temptations of Empire

The United States will sacrifice its character as a republic if it aspires to the role of empire, even a benign and liberal empire. "It is a rare moment and special opportunity in history when the acknowledged dominant global power seeks neither territory nor political empire," observed one group of Americans (perhaps too hastily).<sup>1</sup> For several reasons this issue is central to America's character: the resources required to maintain the empire, the political transformation required in the United States, and the change in cultural values an empire requires.

As wealthy as America is, and by any historical standard it is wealthy indeed, it does not possess, nor can it produce, sufficient wealth to provide for the security of its citizens, offer opportunity to future generations of middle-class and lower-income people, pay for future health care and retirement programs, maintain occupying armies and civil administrations in the Middle East and other troubled regions of presumed interest, invest in technological research and innovation, and balance its budgets. The British Empire finally collapsed in the 1950s because it bankrupted itself and the United States was

unwilling to lend it money and pay the costs of maintaining its extended sovereignty.

Politically, even the most ardent advocates of U.S. imperialism have yet to define where we should and should not impose our will and our cultural values. Though they will not openly and honestly say so, the larger Middle East, to include much of the Arab world, seems to be a principal imperial target and goal. Exactly what our long-term purposes are—whether the economic importance of oil reserves or the political importance of settling Israel and Palestine—we have yet to be candidly told. The myth of suppressing terrorism will hold only until our prolonged military occupation of parts of the region provokes the terrorist attacks on America that it surely will.

The question repeatedly recurs: How far does our empire go, and where does it all end? Suppose, for example, trouble in Mexico produces increased floods of illegal immigrants and refugees into California and Texas, border friction, and clashes between radical, renegade Mexican factions and the U.S. Border Patrol. Suppose, further, this upheaval threatens Mexican oil exports to the United States. There certainly would be U.S. “interests” in suppressing violence, reducing immigration, and restarting oil flows. In terms of oil supplies (there it is again), the same would be true of Venezuela. But what of other Latin nations? Would the United States display its benign imperial reach to deter a wave of repressive authoritarian governments in Argentina, Brazil, or Chile?

Then there is Africa to consider. Surely a radical fundamentalist regime in Cairo would threaten our designs in the Middle East. The Mubarak government, which we pay handsomely to behave and maintain internal order, will not last forever. Post-Qaddafi Libya, whose oil will shortly reenter world markets, could migrate in any number of directions. Then there are the expanding oil reserves being discovered in

West Africa. How shall the new American empire go about establishing and maintain benign and friendly governments in half a dozen or so countries to guarantee the availability of that oil? Once massive investments by American oil companies are made in production and transmission facilities in West Africa, Rwanda-style tribal slaughter threatening those investments cannot be tolerated.

Across in Asia a fundamentalist takeover in a major nation such as Indonesia, with a population of 800 million people, would threaten the peace and stability of a wide region, not to say also strategic maritime choke points such as the Strait of Molocca. And in the Indian subcontinent, the fate of Pakistan, less stable and secure than we suppose it to be, invites American imperial interest. A Pakistan in the hands of a burgeoning new bin Laden, with nuclear weapons at his disposal, would be sorely tempted to rally nationalist and fundamentalist religious fervor behind reclaiming Kashmir and Jammu and settling long-standing scores with secular India. The American empire could not afford to let this happen.

All this and more, without mentioning the troublesome future of Saudi Arabia, semivisible cankers such as Taiwan and China, the technical state of war between Russia and Japan over the Kyril Islands (or Northern Territories), make the world an interesting and challenging place for a putative American empire.

It is not enough to say the United States will exercise its benign and liberal influence where it has “interests.” It has interests in all these places, and more. In most, if not all, of these significant places of interest and importance, politics is complex, economies are troubled, and ethnic and cultural currents are layered. The exercise of American imperial influence would in almost all cases require at least some military intervention and occupation and long-term civil administration on

a scale approximating our involvement in Iraq. If only two or three of these nations or regions required American supervision, the size of our armed forces and military presence and the costs of occupation and administration would be, as the Iraqi experience is proving, staggering.

As current federal deficits prove, these costs will be paid at the expense of education for our children, care for our elderly, and investment in innovation. They will also entail other political and social costs. Extended foreign military deployments, once again as illustrated by Afghanistan and Iraq, will deter reenlistments and choices toward military careers and, therefore, invite the alternative of conscription. How many young Americans are sufficiently interested in the American empire to interrupt their education, employment, and family life to serve it? Certainly careers will open up in a dramatically expanded diplomatic corps (Colonial Office?). But these will become less appealing as American colonial headquarters in Cameroon, Karachi, and Baghdad become walled enclaves and the natives take it upon themselves to sweeten the morning coffee with strychnine. This not even to mention those nasty car bombs at the embassy gates.

To fulfill the ambitions of empire will require changes in American political culture and, therefore, political leadership of sufficient dimension to explain why America's values and purposes must change. If transition from the war on terrorism to "regime change" in Baghdad was an invasion almost too far, what will be required to convince Americans that security from terrorists demands selective preemption, preventive wars, then long-term military occupations, then a far-flung permanent empire? It is almost comic to suggest, as some have done with a straight face, that America has been an empire since Daniel Boone crossed over into Appalachia. America must "come to terms with the fact," counsels Niall Ferguson,

"that this republic, almost from its very inception, began to behave like another British Empire."<sup>2</sup> A curious observation perhaps available only to a non-American.

Considerable imagination is required to suppose an American president straightforwardly declaring either that we already are an empire and should admit it or that we have no choice but to become a new empire with all the responsibilities, obligations, duties, and costs implied. This dilemma is highlighted by the revealing remarks of an advocate of the American empire theory: "I don't actually advocate a declaration [that America is an empire]. It would greatly alarm American voters who continue to bask in the illusion that their country's vast overseas military commitments and economic engagements and regular military interventions are in some strange way the actions of a non-empire."<sup>3</sup>

Right about the alarm; wrong about the illusion. In none of its current military deployments, save Afghanistan and Iraq, and none of its economic engagements does the United States undertake civil administration, administration of justice, imposition of property codes, sanctioning of political structures, or structuring financial institutions. Indeed, in places like Somalia and Haiti we were criticized for leaving before these things were done. It is a far cry from stationing forces at the request of a host government to support indigenous armies to undertaking to run a country according to our will and our own design.

The fear of alarming the citizens of the United States is well-taken. To publicly promote an American colonial empire and advocate its expansion is not a path calculated to achieve political success and widespread public acceptance. This may or may not have been President Bush's objective in Iraq, but he certainly did not dare employ the rhetoric of empire. And this is the point. Is it really the purpose of the

advocates of empire, presumed or proposed, to achieve this grand objective in secret, to spread America's military and political tentacles without telling the American people what they are up to?

Such a suggestion is breathtaking in its audacity. It is even more breathtaking in what it reveals about the attitude of the neo-imperialists toward the American people. "Contempt" is too mild a word, "disdain" even more so. The theme of shielding the American people from the truth about their own government's imperial activities and ambitions runs throughout the neo-imperialist literature. One writer advocates "supremacy by stealth," recognition that the United States already "possesses a global empire," which it must manage "in the shadows and behind closed doors."<sup>4</sup> The stealth required for this historic American departure is not for the rest of the world, which will surely feel the harsh effects of America's shadowy enterprise, but for the American people, lest they awake one day to ponder exactly when they lost the Republic they were taught to salute and over which they were, at least in theory, sovereign.

There is a world of difference between a historic power such as the United States using its power and influence to organize the world community to provide security, expand opportunity, and promote liberal democracy, on the one hand, and the United States using its military power to overthrow governments, impose its own colonial administrations, and occupy foreign countries for many years, on the other. In the former case the United States seeks to impose neither control nor will, organizes the resources of others, exercises benign influence, leads rather than dictates, and is motivated by the common good and common interest. It is governed by its own constitutional principles and remains true to its republican heritage. In the latter case the United States advances its own interests

at the point of a spear, sometimes covertly and surreptitiously, it governs countries directly through proconsuls or colonial administrators or indirectly through handpicked puppet governments, it pays its costs where possible through the sale of local resources, and its long-term presence or occupation is required to solidify the order it seeks to impose.

In the latter case the problem of selectivity is a real one. It might be called the North Korea or Iran problem. If, as was argued by the administration regarding Iraq, preemptive invasion and occupation are required to eliminate threats to our security, then the same approach should be used in North Korea and Iran (among other problem spots), which represent equal or greater threats. Given this inconsistency, at least one of two things must be true. Either elimination of a threat was not the real reason for occupying Iraq, or we will exercise the option of empire only in those venues where it is relatively convenient and easy to do so. It is not impossible that both things are true.

By deduction, then (since, again, none of this is being debated in Congress or discussed openly and candidly with the American people), the putative American empire will have these characteristics: nations representing the color of threat that can be conquered relatively easily will be targeted; it is hoped friendly governments can be quickly imposed, but long-term occupation and administration remain an option; the presence of a valuable resource such as oil will be an important and perhaps determining factor; the opportunity to condition the behavior of other nations in the region in our favor will weigh heavily; if the use of military power is too costly, economic leverage may be employed or political pressure applied; finally, the less public discussion of this strategy in the United States, the better. The American people should not be involved, as they might become alarmed.

This last point is real, not ironic or argumentative. The reason that citizens and taxpayers would be alarmed if straightforwardly and honestly presented the strategy of empire is simple: it is not who we are. It is contrary to our principles and beliefs.

Largely unmoved by arguments from principle, strategists of empire employ obfuscation on the grounds the American people are confused by idealized self-deception regarding our true nature and impatient with protracted foreign struggles. Both are patently false perceptions. Americans are intuitively clear about their political culture and values. And, as demonstrated through five years of World War II and forty-five years of the Cold War, we can bear the long haul—but only if we are told the truth, and only if the truth conforms to our basic principles.

There is always the possibility that the American people, out of fear of terrorism, desire for cheap oil, or just sheer arrogance of power, are now prepared to become imperialists and colonialists. However, strategists of empire should not bank on this character transformation, particularly when the costs of empire come due. Larger armies and navies, more invasions, systematic loss of troops to hostile guerilla factions, higher taxes, larger deficits—all have distinctly sobering affects. Even more sobering will be the fundamental changes wrought within our own society: loss of any sense of idealism; erosion of national self-respect; anger at systematic deception by our government; alienation from the global community; loss of popular sovereignty and dedication to the common good; and sacrifice of any notion of nobility.

Empire and its costs are the prices we pay for security, say the strategists of empire. This argument might bear some plausibility if empire, in fact and indeed, produced security. One need look no further than the closest parallel, the British Empire

in the twentieth century, however, to understand the security fallacy. Take the bloody dissolution of the Raj in India, for example, and the even bloodier partition that followed British withdrawal. This, even though British rule was brought down by passive nonviolence and civil disobedience. Regardless of their proclaimed benign purposes, empires have a way of dying hard. But perhaps American purveyors of empire have it in mind to leave that matter to future generations.

Take even more, for example, the British experience in the Middle East between 1917 and 1945. For every propped-up ruling “friend” there were a thousand resentful enemies in tribal cultures resistant to central control, particularly foreign central control. The British left no stable liberal democracies in the troubled wake of their departure. Even in the case of the one exception, Israel, the British crossed its borders with what were to them terrorists at their back and what were, for the Israelis, “forces of national liberation.” The struggle left behind continues six decades later, left largely for the United States to resolve.

Little consolation or encouragement is to be found for the United States in the British imperial experience. In fact, the lessons should be cautionary and sobering. Yet here we are, entering the Middle East as an imperial power as the British did almost a century ago. What future naïve and earnest power will be left to pick up the pieces after America’s departure years hence must be a matter for conjecture, and perhaps sober reflection.

In his national security strategy (published in February 2003), President George W. Bush gave as the alternative to the doctrines of preemption and military superiority, and implicitly long-term occupation, “to remain idle while danger gathers.” If there are proponents of remaining idle, they are also remaining silent.

There are a variety of alternatives to a strategy of empire based on preemption and occupation. The one argued for here is the strategy founded on principle. Advocates of an American imperial strategy emphasize the good works that can be carried out by an occupying force and a quasi-colonial administration. Those same good works can be carried out where they are requested; they need not be imposed.

A substantially restructured and reorganized Department of State, as recommended by the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, can propose to help any nation, however backward and left out, to establish the rule of law; an honest and uncorrupt civil administration; a system of recognized property rights, market economies, free elections, freedom of assembly, and a free press; and a civil society required to protect and promote these and other liberal democratic institutions. The goal is free and secure societies offering opportunities to their citizens. In few cases is military occupation or imperial governance required to achieve these objectives. Indeed, in most cases the use of force impedes the process by requiring indigenous peoples to accept our ways rather than persuading them it is in their interest to do so.

In a dynamic world, "remaining idle" is not an option, and few serious people advocate it. The issue is whether America's purposes are best achieved through empire and force or through principle and persuasion.

Lest this argument be too hastily dismissed as supremely idealistic, even the most peace-loving republic has legitimate security concerns that can only be addressed through military resources and capabilities. The American Republic has survival, critical, and significant security needs that often require an American military presence, almost always (at least up to now) welcomed by nations hosting land bases and seaport facilities. Rather than being imposed upon reluctant allies,

virtually all of these facilities are made available as the result of arm's-length diplomatic negotiations and generous lease payments. All of which leads to the importance of America's naval capability (the centerpiece of a maritime strategy) in a world where the availability of permanent, fixed land bases becomes problematic and American land forces on foreign soil increasingly become targets—as in Beirut in 1983 and in Saudi Arabia in 1992—rather than stabilizing presences.

The fleet can be in port for a considerable time, and then it can be gone. If welcome, it can stay; if unwelcome, it can leave. It can anchor visibly offshore or remain at length over the horizon. Carrier-based aircraft can project power ashore as can sea-based cruise missiles. The fleet can move from ocean to ocean, from trouble spot to trouble spot. Resupplied at sea, it can remain at sea for half a year or even more. It can support combat operations, patrol vital straits and choke points, participate in alliance exercises, and even host international summits and negotiations.

Though the nineteenth-century British experience offers a model, particularly in that the United States is also an island nation (at least figuratively), it is a great leap from having a maritime strategy to guarantee one's own security to having an empire to occupy and exert power.

Once again, however, lax language usage confuses the discussion. "Like it or not, the power and reach of the United States have already turned it into an empire," according to two writers, citing America's unrivaled military, economic, and political powers. "Only the United States can deploy a truly blue-water navy across every ocean, with 12 mammoth aircraft carriers each housing a modern air armada larger than the entire air force of most countries."<sup>5</sup>

If the simple fact of *having* power, rather than the way in which power is used, constitutes empire, then debate on

this subject is useless. In fact, however, the way in which the United States exercises its power has at least two enormous consequences, one cited by these same authors:

As the Iraq war underscores, the United States' great power enables it to act alone and still achieve many of its goals swiftly and effectively. But over time such a unilateral exercise of power will breed more and more resentment abroad to the point that other states may decide to work together to obstruct the chosen American course. Then, the United States could stand alone, a great power frustrated in the pursuit of its most important goals.<sup>6</sup>

This has been exactly the difficulty the United States has faced in engaging the United Nations in Iraq's complex reconstruction. Even more important, to exercise the United States' great power in a unilateral, imperial manner will be to change who and what America is. We cannot behave imperially and retain our republican heritage.

All empires end badly, and each ends badly in its own way. Too many volumes have been written on the how and why of the demise of the Persian, Roman, Spanish, Ottoman, British, and other empires to rehearse them here. Like nations, empires have individual characteristics that resist common description. Regardless of degrees of ambition, extension, reliance on force, and aggressiveness, however, most empires have shared common qualities.

Empires by definition are hegemonic. They extend their power and influence to nations and regions they dominate. They seek to have those subordinate territories follow their lead, submit to their influence, adopt at least some of their values, and mirror at least some of their cultures, all while surrendering at least some of their resources and treasures. To carry

out their ambitions, more often than not empires are required to use force or the threat of force. Not all subjugation is benign or achieved willingly. Therefore, whether they originally seek to be or not, empires become militaristic. In the case of many empires their presence in alien cultures creates friction on their borders by challenging neighboring cultures and threatening further expansion. Then, eventually, the empire is drawn into such expansion in a restless search for its own unachievable security, and it becomes endlessly acquisitive. To administer and maintain an empire becomes increasingly challenging. Governance and regulation of far-flung territories require dispersed administration. But extension of political authority demands central control and, therefore, concentration of power in the empire's capital. Eventually, this concentration of power and the centralization of command and control, not to say the intricacies of complex foreign administration and suppression of dissent and resistance, lead to the corruption of the empire, not at its extremities but at its center.

Though these characteristics apply in varying degrees to the empires of history, they offer a guide to the character of empire even in the twenty-first century. But care must be taken. The nature of empire, or at least the condition to which the word "empire" is applied, is evolving and expanding. According to observers and analysts of the day, there are cultural empires (and subempires such as "media empires"), economic empires (and subempires such as "banking empires"), benign empires ("we wish no empire here"), reluctant empires ("we only responded to their call for help"), even inevitable empires ("there was no one else to restore order"). As with other instances of corruption of language, if everything becomes an "empire," then nothing is a genuine empire. In this confusion, it is important to preserve the central meaning of empire and the qualities an empire exhibits.

Empires have never been compatible with republics. A nation might originate as a republic and, as most notably with the Romans, end as an empire. There may even be instances of empires that eventually became republics, though none comes to mind. But there are no instances where a power, especially a great power, was simultaneously republic and empire. This is because their essential qualities are incompatible.

Republics throughout history have shared certain norms that are at direct variance with imperial ambition. These include commitment to civic virtue and citizen duty, the centrality of popular sovereignty, resistance to corruption, and a sense of the commonwealth. It is not simply that these values are directly contrary to the behavior and practices of empire just discussed. It is more that they are different in substance and purpose. Civic virtue does not relate to foreign acquisitiveness and subjugation. This is a large part of the reason the Roman republican army of citizen-soldiers turned into a professional, and largely mercenary, army when Rome became imperial in the first century B.C.<sup>7</sup> Popular sovereignty is incompatible with concentration of power and with militarism. The concentration of power required to govern an expanding empire is directly antithetical to any notion of the sovereignty of the people. Republican resistance to corruption is at war with the corrupting influences of empire. Indeed, throughout their history, ambition for empire has been a central cause of the corruption of republics. Commitment to the commonwealth of the republic is impossible to reconcile with the ambitions of hegemony. Consider, for example, the perpetual ambiguity of the status of Puerto Rico; “territories” and “possessions” have no real place in the American Republic’s commonwealth.

In our effort to perfect democratic rights, Americans often neglect our nation’s origins in republican thought and the duties those origins assume. Our founders spoke and wrote

little of democracy. For some, such as Hamilton and Franklin, democracy was a plague and represented the threat of mob rule. Instead, being students of the classical Greeks and Romans, and widely read (in the original language) in Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and Cato, among others, they created a republic. The constitutional debates, assuming republican parameters and language, focused on the *kind* of republic we should be. And that tradition became embedded in the fabric of our political culture. “I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands.”<sup>8</sup> Suffice it to say, even regardless of the new realities of the early twenty-first century that make imperial ambitions problematic at the very least, America cannot assume the imperial role and remain a republic. The two are chalk and cheese, roses and raspberries.

These matters now require reconsideration because of the spreading assumption that the United States has no choice but to become an empire, albeit a benign one. Our status as the lone superpower, indeed “hyperpower,” it is argued, as well as post-Cold War disintegration of old alliances, the failure of states, and the age of terrorism, all require us to assume the obligations of imperial power whether we especially want to or not. Among those advocating this position, the debate is not about whether but about what kind. We have become an empire, the argument goes; now we must define the nature of our new imperial duties and character. We are the largest economy, it is argued, and therefore we represent an economic empire. United States corporations have a presence in virtually all parts of the world. We are the dominant political power and, therefore, are a political empire. Our far-flung diplomatic and consular presence is unrivaled in human history. We have far and away the largest and most powerful military establishment and, therefore, are the default peacemaking empire. Not

only do we retain at least token military presence in Japan and Germany well over a half century after the end of World War II, and in South Korea a half century after the end of Korean hostilities, we now have a very large military presence seeking to pacify Iraq and a smaller, but still active, combat force in Afghanistan. We are training counterinsurgency forces in the Philippines. Our fleet has a substantial presence in three major oceans. And we are a major peacekeeping presence in the former Yugoslavia. We are the de facto guarantors of the world's oil supplies, starting with Gulf War I. Most of all, we are the leader of a shifting multinational coalition conducting the war on terrorism.

Surely, taken all together, this is the profile of an empire if there ever was one. Contrary to neo-imperialist presumptions, the mere fact of having power is not sufficient, in and of itself, to create an empire; an empire arises from how that power is used. Now, much depends on the true intentions of the advocates of empire (and not all are forthrightly stated, even to the American people) and the length of time we maintain military forces to achieve our political purposes in a region. Our presence in Western Europe for a half century was generally (though not always unqualifiedly) accepted by host nations anxious not to be intimidated by the Soviet Union. Likewise, the Japanese, equally concerned about the growing power of the People's Republic of China and constitutionally reluctant to rearm, came, with some reluctance, to accept an American military force in the region.

The same conditions do not apply, however, to the new theater of conflict, the Arab and wider Islamic worlds. Efforts to create a semblance of democracy in Afghanistan are progressing more slowly than expected. There is now every indication that America's welcome in Iraq wore out long before

our efforts at pacification, not to say at democratic stability, begin to succeed.

It is far from clear what America's long-run intentions are in the Middle East and the wider Arab world. Some policy makers have suggested that a permanent U.S. military presence in the region, initially established after Gulf War I and now greatly expanded, allegedly as part of the war on terrorism, is required to guarantee Israel's security and thus achieve peace in the Middle East. If that is indeed our objective, then we have become a hegemonic power in the region, and our military and political presence will be required for decades to come. We will not be welcome in all quarters, needless to say. Widespread resentment of American presence and culture guarantees that we will be engaged in low-intensity conflict, suffer attrition of forces, and find it necessary to carry out patrols and raids, thus further alienating indigenous peoples. If our extended occupation causes friction leading to conflict with other nations in the region, such as Syria and Iran, there will be a call to invade those nations.<sup>9</sup> The imperial characteristics of hegemony, acquisitiveness, and militarism will be institutionalized, and what may have originated as a vague effort to combat terrorism, having become long-term occupation, then morphs into classic empire.

How well do the characteristics of empire square with the large purposes proposed here? Let us review them. These are to achieve a new understanding of security beyond simply a defensive one; to expand economic opportunity at home and abroad by shaping the forces of globalization to offer security and opportunity for others; and to promote liberal democracy. Additionally we hope to base our international relations on common interests; to explore collaborative sovereignty in an effort to address common international causes; and to use our

principles as a guide to our behavior. Let us consider how these purposes relate to the characteristics of empire.

Proponents of a "war-on-terrorism" empire have argued that U.S. military preemption of governments that may threaten us, if not now then eventually, enhances our security. But that is true only if the preemptive invasion and the "regime change" that follows reduce rather than stimulate terrorist retaliation. The war in Iraq shortly led to guerilla operations against U.S. and UN presences but did not immediately stimulate retaliation against the U.S. homeland. It is necessary to recall, however, that al Qaeda documents captured in Afghanistan substantiate the connection between the stationing of American troops in Saudi Arabia following Gulf War I in 1991 and the wave of terrorist attacks that began with the first attack on the World Trade Center two years later. It will take some time before we know whether initiating war against a major Arab state makes us safer or more in danger, more secure or less. Terrorists have proved to be patient.

The large purpose of expanding our understanding of security is to link economic, community, environmental, and other considerations to an appreciation of true security. Simply reducing the terrorist threat does not guarantee security in the proper twenty-first-century meaning of the word. And if the cost of a preemptive approach to the war on terrorism includes long foreign occupations and prolonged military deployments, nation-building, extensive governmental administration, and settling endless internal political disputes, all the while fighting off insurgent forces, all those costs are taken from the resources necessary to ensure genuine security at home. Additionally, the preemptive, imperial approach to the war on terrorism drains resources necessary for another large purpose, investment in American productivity that

would empower us to expand opportunity and offer better alternatives to those in a world without hope.

With the exception of Great Britain, our major twentieth-century allies opposed our invasion of Iraq and largely frowned on a doctrine of preemption and preventive war as contrary to international law. They see our motives as much more imperial, and some of them have sufficient historical experience to know about empire firsthand. Thus, our use of the war on terrorism to broaden U.S. influence in any part of the world, but particularly one as fraught with peril and as rich in oil as the Middle East, is met with skepticism in Europe and elsewhere. By this approach not only is a century of alliance-building endangered and cooperation in the immediate war on terrorism squandered but also the possibility of establishing the common good as a guide for international relationships is greatly diminished. Since, at least in theory, Western nations in addition to ours are terrorist targets, it would seem obvious that conducting preemptive invasions as an antiterrorist measure, but one not seen as such by other threatened nations, might be counterproductive. The allies we will need in many ventures, including eliminating terrorism, should instead be appealed to on the grounds of common interest and common participation. A willingness to "go it alone" may be seen as a sign of strength by some in our government but will be seen by others, including important allies, as hunger for empire.

A new understanding of sovereignty requires examination of those new international challenges that can better be solved through new international institutions. Counterterrorism, peacemaking, nation-building, coercive weapons inspections, and elimination of weapons proliferation all will require less individual national action and much more multinational, cooperative action. This is where new approaches to collabora-

tive sovereignty will be necessary. Preemptive U.S. action will make the collaborative approach virtually impossible.

Most important, the preemptive actions of empire—absent immediate and unavoidable threats of violence—are incompatible with American principles. Few believe that a previous American experiment with empire, the Spanish-American War, in which we acquired control over the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and briefly Cuba, ended well. Nor did it enhance America's stature as a democratic republic to be respected and followed. If the United States seeks to make much of the Arab world a new empire, even a benign one, it will end in even worse ways.

The Cold War required alliances in Europe (such as NATO) and in Asia (such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations). There was little thought of going it alone against the threats represented by the Soviet Union and Communist China. Great diplomatic effort went into the care and maintenance of our alliance. Considerable economic assistance was offered to those willing to stand with us and join in a common defense. These political and military alliances with sovereign nations were the best, indeed the only, alternative either to the formation of an American military empire or to the isolation of the United States within its island fortress.

Almost exactly a decade passed between the collapse of the Soviet Union in August 1991 and the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001. During that period the United States produced no coherent strategy with which to address a rapidly changing world. With the 2001 attack, however, this strategic vacuum was filled by the "war on terrorism" as representing the United States' principal purpose in the world. We gained great sympathy in the world, including from former foes, and sweeping support in our efforts to destroy terrorist networks, including in Afghanistan. This international consensus col-

lapsed, however, with the U.S. invasion of Iraq. We failed to convince the world that this war was a central aspect of the war on terrorism to which many nations had previously subscribed. The proof required for preemptive war is that a threat is "immediate and unavoidable." That proof was extravagantly clear in Afghanistan, but it could not be reproduced in Iraq.

Instead, in the brief interim between war in Afghanistan and war in Iraq, a new doctrine was introduced, the "axis of evil." In earlier days German fascism and Japanese imperialism came to be seen, though not immediately, as evil. Ronald Reagan famously called the Soviet Union an "evil empire." With these exceptions, by and large the United States had not based its foreign policy on theological assertions, preferring instead to accept the presence of wickedness and to deal with it by either containment or ostracization. The idea of a theological empire is a new idea in modern times, and it deserves to be analyzed.

According to the Bible, with Adam "came evil into the world." There is every evidence that it has been here ever since. There is no evidence that it will disappear soon. Assuming these realities, should the United States base its role in the twenty-first-century world on elimination of evil? This seems to be our policy toward Iraq. But, so far at least, containment, not elimination, of evil seems to suffice in other "axis of evil" states—Iran and North Korea. It is also not clear what constitutes sufficient evil in a nation to justify preemptive invasion. Possession of weapons of mass destruction, the threat of the use or sale of such weapons, and the threat of expansion seem to constitute qualification for the "evil" designation. In the case of Saddam Hussein, mistreatment of his people was an added justification for "regime change."

This is complicated stuff in that a number of nations, such as India and Pakistan, possess weapons of mass destruction. It

is estimated that as many as twenty nations will produce biological weapons agents in the next decade or sooner, in addition to the dozen or so now possessing them. There is great fear that the Russian arsenals of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons will be open to international markets, black, white, or gray, at any time if they are not so already. Reprocessing systems render otherwise peaceful nuclear energy programs into bomb factories. And then there are as many as forty or more dictatorships throughout the world that mistreat their people.

The notion of the United States becoming a righteous empire whose mission is at least to contain and selectively to eliminate evil is a novel one. At the very least a definition of those characteristics of evil requiring containment and those requiring elimination should be provided and debated. The costs of the exercise of righteousness in each case must be stated. Where inconsistencies occur, such as between Iraq and North Korea, they must be plausibly justified. Otherwise, American dispensation of righteousness will begin to look arbitrary at best and self-serving at worst. Why are Iraqi people worth saving, say, and not Tutsi tribesmen in Rwanda? Could it be the quantities of oil in one venue and not the other? If so, the moral foundation of the U.S. theological empire weakens considerably.

September 11, 2001, offered the first central organizing principle for foreign policy and military action since the demise of "containment of communism" and the collapse of the Soviet Union ten years earlier. Those whose ability to comprehend the world requires a villain seem to have devised this new mission for the United States—eradicating evil from the world, starting with Saddam Hussein. Having helped dispatch fascism in the mid-twentieth century, and later successfully facing off against expansionist communism, those requiring a messianic purpose for America's role in the world have found

it in the "axis of evil"—Iran, Iraq, and North Korea—and more vividly in the personification of evil, Saddam Hussein.

The three "axis" regimes have little in common, and two of them, Iran and Iraq, waged a bloody, decade-long war against each other. Nevertheless, they combine somehow to replace the Reaganesque "evil empire" of the 1980s. One searches American constitutional history in vain for any justification for America's self-appointed role as the world's avenging angel. Thomas Jefferson, among others, believed there surely to be evil in the world, but rarely in the form of a political enemy. Patrick Henry would have come as close as anyone to casting George III in that light but generally avoided the temptation to do so. More often than not, American revolutionaries saw the monarch as a fuddled old fellow, an Enlightenment-age King Lear misled, on colonial matters at least, by his advisers.

Even for an American it is often difficult to parse the righteousness of the Right today. It is a matter for sober reflection whether the United States might have declared war on Hitler if he had confined the Holocaust within the borders of Germany and not transgressed against all Europe in the process. One will never know. But, in any case, there is a new strong impulse to have American foreign policy dictated by moral, if not moralistic, considerations. The principal question is, Where does it all end?

Having stagnated somewhere along Afghanistan's craggy border with Pakistan, the war on terrorism migrated to Baghdad. Had Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction, the ability to deliver them, and the will to do so, there would have been a broad consensus among the American people—and our allies abroad—to undertake military operations to prevent him from carrying out his will. But some better showing must be made than has hitherto been done that those conditions were met. Though U.S. presidents find

it inconvenient to remember this, the army still does belong to the people. And as bereaved and furious as the American people still are at the September 11 attacks on unarmed civilians, political leaders must still make the case for potential loss of American military personnel and local civilian casualties in wars to eradicate evil from the world.

But, presuming the case is made and the price paid, where indeed does it all end? If eradication of evil is the new foreign policy mantra, there are savage tribal leaders who hack off limbs, mendacious mullahs who stone alleged adulteresses, murderous mafia who gun down their opponents. If one is to believe the Book of Genesis, as we have seen, there will always be evil in the world. It is God's perpetual characterization of the human condition.

It is a minor irony that those in America who ridiculed Jimmy Carter's human rights beliefs as the basis for a "realistic" foreign policy have now trumped him by seeking to make America the world's avenging angel. One would not expect hardheaded foreign policy "realists" to be operating on good-and-evil wavelengths. During the Reagan and first Bush years (except for the "evil empire"), foreign policy discussions had to do with pursuing America's "interests." Now we would become the self-appointed scourge of all evildoers in the world. Our interest has suddenly become righteousness itself. It is as if the great abolitionist, mad John Brown himself, had become secretary of state.

Americans have largely forgotten that we ceased our humanitarian efforts in Somalia when eighteen American troops were lost. And we have truly forgotten the impact on American politics of seeing on television the large loss of civilian, and American military, lives in Vietnam.

President Bush did warn us in 2003 that the war on terrorism would not be easy and would not be over soon. Still, he did

not say that our ultimate enemy was neither a ruthless dictator, nor a crazed rich fundamentalist, nor some left-over communists, but *evil itself*. Had he done so, then a debate might have arisen over whether adoption of a messianic foreign policy was exactly what we ought to be doing in this new millennium.

Missing in all this is any apparent awareness on the part of U.S. policy makers of the revolutions transforming our age and producing the kind of confusion that might cause righteousness to become America's default foreign policy. Globalization, the information revolution, the eroding sovereignty of the nation-state, and the transformation of conflict, as argued here, are all new realities requiring democracy's attention and response. If the United States neglects the historic importance of these revolutions, policy will be skewed. Even worse, it will be irrelevant. Righteousness is apparently meant to fill a vacuum created by America's inability to grasp the significance of these revolutions and turn them into powerful engines for global progress and the achievement of America's large strategic purposes.

Terrorists must be pursued down any dark alleys in which they choose to hide. But if that mandate becomes America's sole preoccupation and monolithic cause, we risk becoming a monomaniacal Ahab or a dreamy Quixote while the twenty-first-century world passes us by. Like Wellington reviewing his troops before Waterloo, we do not know whether a millenarian America as avenging angel frightens the enemy. But it certainly ought to frighten us.

The war on terrorism does not justify an American empire, not even one based on a crusade against evil. To pursue a theological empire would require a Department of State populated by priests, rabbis, and theologians, and to do so would surely threaten America as a republic.

State-sponsored terrorism is an act of war and, presuming proof, must be dealt with as such. The most effective way of dealing with non-state-sponsored terrorism is through the kind of international intelligence and law enforcement networks that proved so effective against al Qaeda after September 11, 2001. Such networks and cooperation preclude the necessity of invasion of states and overthrow of regimes but do permit coercive and intrusive inspections authorized by international authority. In other words, existing international alliances and systems are sufficiently adept at tracking and apprehending nonstate actors to alleviate the requirement that, absent an immediate and unavoidable threat, the United States act alone to protect itself. The alliance approach also assures that nation-building obligations and costs will be shared among a variety of nations and not assumed solely by the United States, as now appears to be the very expensive case in American-occupied Iraq.

The large purposes proposed in this book are incompatible with the United States as empire. They are based on the premise that America is the world's leader, that its leadership must be exercised in a revolutionary world, that its principles are one of its most important resources and powers, and that it will and must remain a democratic republic within the context of those principles.

## 8 ✧

### Restoring the Republic . . . and Its Principles

America as a republic, and a principled one at that, is central to our grand strategy and to the arguments presented in this essay. America's founders were united in the cause of creating a new republic. They debated fiercely what kind of republic it should be.

Throughout much of our history Americans have seen our country as a land of constitutional rights and economic opportunities. In the eighteenth century we fought a war for independence and liberty. In the nineteenth century we occupied the West and industrialized the nation. In the twentieth century we achieved material prosperity, at least for the middle and upper classes, and dismantled many gender and racial barriers. The cultural emphasis throughout this history was on the rugged individualism of the cowboy or the autonomy and independence of the entrepreneur. More often than not the national government was seen as the protector of powerful interests and the status quo by those left behind or as a barrier to individual initiative by those resistant to regulation.

We have accepted the necessity of collective action only reluctantly and usually in time of crisis—to save the Union, to survive a depression, to defend democracy against fascism

and communism, to defeat terrorism. But by and large the American citizen's relationship to government has been a wary one, often skeptical and, in times of public corruption, even cynical.

Conservatives traditionally have seen government as the protector of vested interests, rights, and property and otherwise as a hindrance or as "the problem." Liberals have viewed the national government from time to time as the instrument of social progress but also, depending on its management, as a danger to their civil liberties.

None of this is necessarily bad, except that it obscures the other side of the American political coin. We are not just a democracy of rights; we are principally a republic of duties. Further, our nature as a republic presupposes a common good, a commonwealth, a definable national interest greater than a mere collection of narrow or special interests.

We have an interest in our common security, all would agree. We own immense wealth in common in our public lands, timber, minerals, and other resources, though ideologues and interest groups continue to press for their wholesale privatization (and perhaps logically so because the less we hold in common, the less the need for a national government to administer and protect common goods). We have a common interest in the health of our environment, though the extent of allowable pollution continues to be debated. And to some degree the rise and fall of our economy affects us all, except perhaps those with the gilded yachts and mansions on the hill.

Occasionally, national leaders—a Lincoln, a Theodore Roosevelt, a Franklin Roosevelt, a John Kennedy, and even, briefly after 9/11, a George W. Bush—challenge us to consider our common good and common interests. But when crisis recedes, we tend to return to our individualistic ways

and resist the notion of collective action and responsibility. It is not uncommon, though, for those who have served in combat, or the Peace Corps, or in emergency response to catastrophe to recollect those experiences as the most intensely felt times of their lives and often the most meaningful and satisfying. We celebrate "the greatest generation" not for what its members did individually but for what they achieved collectively.

There is within almost every American soul a desire to make a contribution to some kind of greater good, to invest time and energy to make our nation better, to know the unique satisfaction of helping one's country and society. We call that sense idealism—the notion that the gap between what is and what ought to be can be narrowed if we will simply dedicate at least a portion of ourselves to that effort and that dream.

The world does divide itself between realists and idealists, or perhaps it is a division between those who accept a kind of Darwinian determinism dictated by fate or natural selection—a Calvinistic predestinarianism dividing the saved from the damned—and those who believe that nothing is "written," that the human condition can be improved, that none need be left behind. Robert Kennedy was noted for saying, "Some men see things as they are and say why; I dream of things that never were and say why not."

The sense of idealism has roots in political theory and reality. It is the very essence of the republic. From ancient Greece and early Rome, the ideal of the republic was founded on civic virtue—the sense of citizen duty; on popular sovereignty—the notion that we are self-governing and thus determine our own destiny; on resistance to corruption—requiring the common good to prevail over special interests; and on the commonwealth itself—the collective stewardship of all those things we hold in common.

The restoration of the American Republic is central to America's role in the world, but a republican restoration is also necessary if we are to secure our future. And that restoration is the best and perhaps only alternative to the temptations of empire.

The qualities of the Republic are related to each other and to the realities of our age. A spirit of citizen duty and participation is required to guarantee the sovereignty of the people. When citizens abdicate their duties, they are no longer sovereign. Popular sovereignty is necessary to resist corruption. For the classical republicans as well as for America's republican founders, corruption was not simple bribery; it was placing personal interest or a special interest above the common good or commonwealth. For having common interests was what gave the Republic meaning and purpose. Without a common purpose there was no republic.

Duty, sovereignty, integrity, and the common good: these are the hallmarks of the Republic. To secure our future and to pursue our grand strategy, we must restore these qualities to America.

In the twenty-first century, restoration of the values of the republic will be at least as important as the reiteration of the rights of the democracy in addressing our revolutionary age. For example, civic virtue, the duty of citizens to participate in public life and self-governance, will be vital to invigorating the community, the most immediate forum of government, in an age where economic power is spiraling upward and therefore out of control and where citizens will increasingly feel the need to control their political destinies.

And through the revitalization of communities, citizens can not only perform their civic duties but also exercise their popular sovereignty. Our national and state governments are representative democracies. Our community governments,

or "elementary republics" as Thomas Jefferson called them, are the venues in which citizens can directly and immediately participate in the governing of their own affairs. The citizen's vote is cast in the representative republics; his or her voice is heard in the local republic. Only in the community is popular sovereignty immediately exercised.

When popular sovereignty is exercised, corruption cannot take root. It would require a lobbyist army of immense proportions to influence the decisions of thousands of small community republics all across America. Placing narrow, personal, or special interests ahead of the national interest and the common good is not just a definition of corruption in classical terms; it is also, sadly, a description of American government in the early twenty-first century. By the classical definition of corruption, America is today a massively corrupt republic. Some political scientists assure us that, out of the clash of special interests, the national interest emerges. Republicans throughout history, including myself, refute that idea. The clash of special interests produces corrupt government and citizen cynicism and distrust. One need only look to the sad state of public confidence in government today to understand the point.

And when citizens are distrustful, do not exercise their sovereign rights, and do not perform their civic duties, they are not prepared to carry out their most important duty, that of defense of their communities. Loss of a sense of civic duty, popular sovereignty, and the common good turns people inward. They think of defending themselves, in the manner of modern-day "militia," not the greater community. The changing nature of conflict, the emergence of the real and present danger of terrorism visited on America, now requires, for the first time since 1812, a new front line of defense, the citizen-soldier. The "first responders" in the war

on terrorism on the home front are the citizen, the fireman, the policeman, the emergency health provider. We are all "first responders."

Globalization, information, sovereignty, and conflict. These revolutions of the twenty-first century summon forth the ideals and values of the Republic. As important as asserting our rights may be, such assertions are no substitute for performance of our duties, participating in our community governance by way of asserting our popular sovereignty, resisting corruption by putting our national interest first, and becoming citizen-soldiers in defense of our families and communities.

Civic duty, popular sovereignty, resistance to corruption, and a sense of the common good, these are the values of the republic and the necessary response to the new realities of the twenty-first century. In the real world of governance, these national values must form the basis for policies. This book proposes a new vision of security in a new and different century and a framework of ideas for achieving that security. It makes the large purpose of achieving security the basis for our other large purposes of expanding opportunity and promoting liberal democracy.

Security must include not only protection from violence but also the security of our livelihood and, therefore, income, shelter, nutrition, and health care for our families. It must include the stability of our communities and, therefore, protection from terrorist attacks, as well as protection from the massive dislocation of a bankrupt or relocated major employer. It includes the security of a clean environment and, therefore, freedom from man-made poisons in our air, water, and land. And it must include the security of all our children's futures and, therefore, protection of future generations from disease, ignorance, pollution, and poverty.

This new security is central to our common good. Its foundation is an imaginative program for public investment in our people, our public structures, and our private productivity. It is inherent in a foreign policy based on America's highest and best principles. It includes a new defense policy that incorporates military reform ideas and fourth-generation warfare capabilities with an understanding of the changing nature of conflict.

America's twenty-first-century strategy must be based on a framework of ideas for economic security through productivity rather than unnecessary consumption, for international security through principled engagement in the world rather than unilateralism, and for national security through new approaches to defense. New economic security requires a strategy of long-term investment in our people, our laboratories, our schools and universities, our productivity, and our infrastructure. It requires energy security sufficient to prevent the loss of American lives fighting unnecessarily for foreign oil. It requires rewarding investment and taxing unnecessary consumption and thus requires a reversal of our current national values.

New international security requires a foreign policy based on principled engagement, internationalism based on historic American principles of liberal democracy, tolerance of diversity, respect for difference of culture and viewpoint, and acknowledgment of an expanding global common. Principled engagement depends on shared security duties and rejection of unilateralism. It depends on expanded trade based on international rules for worker and environmental protection. It fundamentally depends not on America's selling its values and ideals but on its *living* them.

Our new national strategy for securing our future depends on an understanding of the transformation of war and the

changing nature of conflict. We must have superior intelligence, particularly human intelligence, to achieve that understanding, new special forces to disrupt terrorist networks, and light, swift, and lethal intervention forces to protect America's legitimate interests. We must form a multinational capability for stabilizing or rebuilding fragile states. This national strategy absolutely requires a much greater sense of urgency for homeland security. And our new national security strategy for the future certainly means being smarter and quicker than those who wish us ill.

All these things—economic growth and justice through investment and productivity, principled global engagement, and a new national security policy—are central to securing our future and applying our powers to the achievement of our large purposes, in other words, to producing and achieving a grand strategy for the United States in the twenty-first century.

## Conclusion

The principles and large purposes proposed in this essay are meant to suggest a *framework* in which policy can be made. They are designed to encourage new strategic thinking about how we should act on the world stage. And they are meant as a caution against how we should not act. It is not only possible but necessary for America to think and act strategically in the current new century: *to transform our domestic economy from one of consumption to one of production and, through long-term investment, to recapitalize our education and technology base and achieve energy security; to use the forces of globalization and information to strengthen and expand existing democratic alliances and create new ones; to employ those alliances to destroy terrorist networks and establish new security structures; and, guided by our historic principles, to lead international coalitions in spreading economic opportunity and liberal democracy and in nation-building, counterproliferation, and environmental protection.*

In pursuing this strategy we should not emulate European *realpolitik* traditions and practices associated with European statesmen of old. We are not a people who see the world principally in terms of the exercise of power, though its exercise is

necessary when required for security and stability. Nor should either American political party, or any ideology, presume to possess a monopoly on the exercise of American power.

We should not hide our policies from our own people or from the world at large. In the long run, and increasingly in the short run, there are few if any secrets. Our policies must withstand the therapy of sunlight. In almost every case, except the most important security secrets, if we are afraid to disclose our practices or intentions, it usually means we will be ashamed of them when they are ultimately exposed.

We should not behave differently toward others, including the most humble nations, than we would have them behave toward us. Our dealings must be not only transparent but also fair and just. This is true all the more so since we now stand constantly examined in the court of international opinion, and we do not have the excuse of combating communism to rationalize our misdeeds. Even our resistance to terrorism must not become a new excuse to shortcut our principles, bully our neighbors and allies, and act as the new empire builders.

In the closing decades of the Cold War we oscillated between a policy of "values" (human rights) and a policy of "interests" (power and its applications). We should not separate our values from our power or our power from our values. A truly great power exercises that power humanely, judiciously, and fairly to all. Power exercised for its own sake, or for the sake of a selfish or expedient interest, is ultimately self-defeating. As a successor to the central organizing principle of containment of communism, this framework for a national strategy is based on democratic principles and republican values—a strategy that is resolute but is also one the American people can be proud of.

Our duties as republicans and our freedoms as democrats are the source of our principles, both for ourselves and for

other peoples in the world. We can achieve a new kind of security in a new century only by constant resort to these principles. And we can preserve our status as leaders only through a new grand strategy that recognizes that our small planet increasingly requires both enlightened and *principled* engagement in our common human interests.

Perhaps most important, all Americans must now become engaged in their nation's conduct in the world. Our foreign policy, our relations with the peoples of the world, is no longer the province of so-called experts. The forces of globalization, the spread of American commercial and cultural influence, the internationalization of the Internet, the immediacy of travel, the rise of a global environmental common all now require the engagement of the American people. We must not let our role in the world be dictated by ideologues with their special biases and agendas, by militarists who long for the clarity of Cold War confrontation, or by think-tank theorists who grind their academic axes.

As war is too important to be left to the generals, so, in the twenty-first century, is foreign policy too important to be left to specialized elites and interests. In this century, the veil separating the foreign policy priesthood from the people must be removed. We, the people, must insist that our nation's finest principles characterize our dealings with our global neighbors. In this new age, our policy toward the world must be the policy of the American people—a policy that reflects our belief in our freedom, a policy that shows our desire to be friends and helpful neighbors, a policy that makes us proud of our heritage when we meet our foreign neighbors abroad and when we greet them here at home, and most of all a policy that leaves a legacy to our children that makes them proud of us.

For the first time since 1812, our security has become a function of the community. America will prevail in this new age

more because of the strength of its citizens than the power of its military arsenal. But our citizens must be engaged in this fight, to a much greater degree than they have been, by our political leadership.

The new century of paradox dictates that the world's greatest power must look not to its far-flung branches but to its roots—not to its elaborate materialistic systems of production and consumption but to its ideals and principles, not to its greed but to its honor. From 1949 until 1991, we lived under the threat of nuclear war and depended on a policy of containment and a doctrine of deterrence to protect us. That was the basis of our national security. Today those tasked with carrying out the military aspects of our strategy are our neighbors and fellow citizens, men and women with homes and families just like ours. Their vigilance and sacrifice cannot be taken for granted or we demean our rich heritage of democratic freedom guaranteed by the bloodshed of generations of Americans who have stood the lonely post far from home to assure our safety and security.

War is not an instrument of policy; it is a failure of policy. We cannot discuss the use of military power as an instrument of national policy without recognition that it is the lives of our sons and daughters that are most immediately at stake. We all must now earn our rights by performance of our duties. And our duty to our sons and daughters requires our policy makers to hold their lives in sacred trust. Only then will our national security be both just and strong, and only then can we be truly proud of who we are.

These ideas—an encompassing plan for productivity through savings and investment, especially investment in our children, accountable economic systems, goal-oriented budget priorities, energy security, community governance, and public legacies—are not economic policies in the traditional

sense by any means. They are meant to stimulate a different way of thinking about our economic values in the context of a new understanding of security. In the twenty-first century security will mean much more than freedom from attack from other nations. It must include security from terrorist violence, security of livelihood, security of community, and security for our children and future generations.

This economic framework is not partisan but American. It is designed not to rehearse stale old quarrels between Right and Left but to stimulate a new way of thinking about our economic choices and priorities. This framework is based on a commonsense notion—if we get our national goals right, reasonable people, imaginative, creative Americans, will figure out the right way to achieve them.

Most Americans are tired of a host of special interests fighting it out for bigger pieces of a pie that is not growing—a fight carried out behind the closed doors of the White House and congressional offices by people who have given and received vast amounts of special interest campaign contributions. Instead, let us establish our national goals and priorities for the twenty-first century. Those priorities will guide our public choices and economic methods and will truly enable us to achieve security from violence, security of livelihood, security of community, and security for future generations.

These new policy approaches, creating a framework for restoration of the American Republic, would resonate with that founder who continues to provoke our consciousness, that peculiarly eighteenth-century man whose vision reaches into the twenty-first century, Thomas Jefferson.

Politics today is too much about careerism, special interest, campaign contributions and access—what *I* need, what *I* want, about *my* rights. But the ideal is about the common

good, or what is best for all of us, as well as our children and future generations. Politics is, as Plato said, “an art whose business is a concern for souls.” The ideal of America concerns a nation of people still searching for a nobler cause, for a better destiny. We are better than who we are today. And because we know this, we are frustrated by the gap between who we are and who we should be.

America still represents a promise, a promise that democratic people can learn to live together better, that we can rise above autonomy and selfishness, that we can create a “city on a hill.” We must challenge ourselves to join in realizing that promise, in holding our nation and ourselves to a higher standard, to use the creativity of our minds to find new ways to realize the passion in our hearts—a passion for a just society, for a great society, and for the ideal of the American Republic.

## Appendix ✧

The following memorandum was sent to President William J. Clinton by the author on November 5, 1993.

### Memorandum to President William J. Clinton

#### *Elements of a New Grand Strategy*

SUMMARY. Our nation requires a new grand strategy. For a half-century our consensus strategy was to contain communism and presume that an ever-expanding market economy would pay the costs of containment and produce a middle-class living standard for most Americans. This strategy is no longer viable or relevant due to the failure of communist ideology, the disintegration of the nation-state, the emergence of powerful, competitive trading blocs, and the erosion of America’s traditional economic base. A new grand strategy should incorporate the following elements:

- first, it should coalesce the nation around an agenda for social renewal founded upon transition to a knowledge-based economy;