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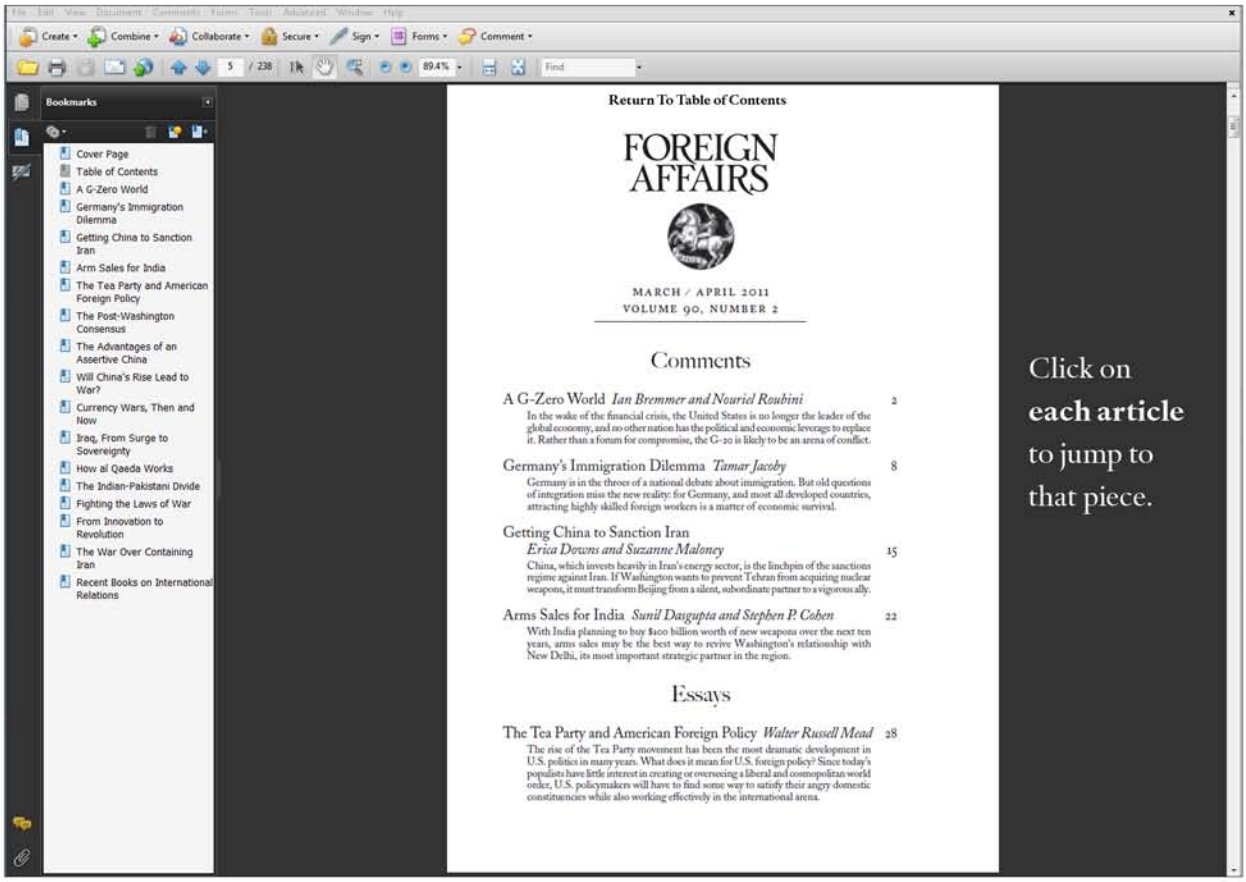

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The most talked-about global economic trend in recent years has been "the rise of the rest," with Brazil, Russia, India, and China leading the charge. But international economic convergence is a myth. Few countries can sustain unusually fast growth for a decade, and even fewer, for more than that. Now that the boom years are over, the BRICs are crumbling; the international order will change less than expected.

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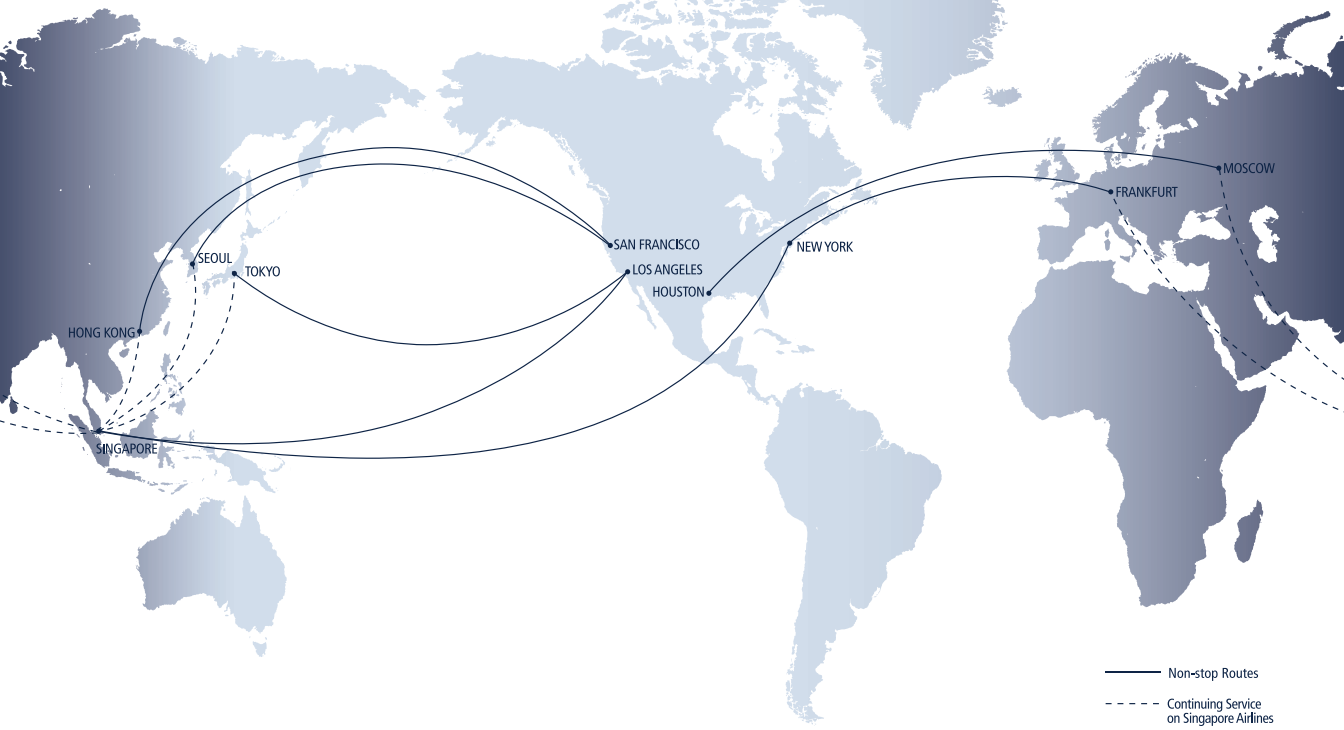


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Broken BRICs

Why the Rest Stopped Rising

Ruchir Sharma

Over the past several years, the most talked-about trend in the global economy has been the so-called rise of the rest, which saw the economies of many developing countries swiftly converging with those of their more developed peers. The primary engines behind this phenomenon were the four major emerging-market countries, known as the BRICs: Brazil, Russia, India, and China. The world was witnessing a once-in-a-lifetime shift, the argument went, in which the major players in the developing world were catching up to or even surpassing their counterparts in the developed world.

These forecasts typically took the developing world's high growth rates from the middle of the last decade and extended them straight into the future, juxtaposing them against predicted sluggish growth in the United States and other advanced industrial countries. Such exercises supposedly proved that, for example, China was on the verge of overtaking the United States as the world's largest economy—a point that Americans clearly took to heart, as over 50 percent of them, according to a Gallup poll conducted this year, said they think that China is already the world's "leading" economy, even though the U.S. economy is still more than twice as large (and with a per capita income seven times as high).

As with previous straight-line projections of economic trends, however—such as forecasts in the 1980s that Japan would soon be number one economically—later returns are throwing cold water on the extravagant predictions. With the world economy heading for its worst year since 2009, Chinese growth is slowing sharply, from double digits down to seven percent or even less. And the rest of the BRICs are tumbling, too: since 2008, Brazil's annual growth has dropped from 4.5 percent to two percent; Russia's, from seven percent to 3.5 percent; and India's, from nine percent to six percent.

None of this should be surprising, because it is hard to sustain rapid growth for more than a decade. The unusual circumstances of the last decade made

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it look easy: coming off the crisis-ridden 1990s and fueled by a global flood of easy money, the emerging markets took off in a mass upward swing that made virtually every economy a winner. By 2007, when only three countries in the world suffered negative growth, recessions had all but disappeared from the international scene. But now, there is a lot less foreign money flowing into emerging markets. The global economy is returning to its normal state of churn, with many laggards and just a few winners rising in unexpected places. The implications of this shift are striking, because economic momentum is power, and thus the flow of money to rising stars will reshape the global balance of power.

FOREVER EMERGING

The notion of wide-ranging convergence between the developing and the developed worlds is a myth. Of the roughly 180 countries in the world tracked by the International Monetary Fund, only 35 are developed. The markets of the rest are emerging—and most of them have been emerging for many decades and will continue to do so for many more. The Harvard economist Dani Rodrik captures this reality well. He has shown that before 2000, the performance of the emerging markets as a whole did not converge with that of the developed world at all. In fact, the per capita income gap between the advanced and the developing economies steadily widened from 1950 until 2000. There were a few pockets of countries that did catch up with the West, but they were limited to oil states in the Gulf, the nations of southern Europe after World War II, and the economic "tigers" of East Asia. It was only after 2000 that the emerging markets as a whole started to catch up; nevertheless, as of 2011, the difference in per capita incomes between the rich and the developing nations was back to where it was in the 1950s.

This is not a negative read on emerging markets so much as it is simple historical reality. Over the course of any given decade since 1950, on average, only a third of the emerging markets have been able to grow at an annual rate of five percent or more. Less than one-fourth have kept up that pace for two decades, and one-tenth, for three decades. Only Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Hong Kong have maintained this growth rate for four decades. So even before the current signs of a slowdown in the BRICs, the odds were against Brazil experiencing a full decade of growth above five percent, or Russia, its second in a row.

Meanwhile, scores of emerging markets have failed to gain any momentum for sustained growth, and still others have seen their progress stall after reaching middle-income status. Malaysia and Thailand appeared to be on course to emerge as rich countries until crony capitalism, excessive debts, and overpriced currencies caused the Asian financial meltdown of 1997–98. Their growth has disappointed ever since. In the late 1960s, Burma (now officially called Myanmar), the Philippines, and Sri Lanka were billed as the next Asian tigers, only to falter badly well before they could even reach the middle-class average income of about $5,000 in current dollar terms. Failure to sustain growth has been the general rule, and that rule is likely to reassert itself in the coming decade.

In the opening decade of the twenty-first century, emerging markets became such a celebrated pillar of the global

economy that it is easy to forget how new the concept of emerging markets is in the financial world. The first coming of the emerging markets dates to the mid-1980s, when Wall Street started tracking them as a distinct asset class. Initially labeled as "exotic," many emerging-market countries were then opening up their stock markets to foreigners for the first time: Taiwan opened its up in 1991; India, in 1992; South Korea, in 1993; and Russia, in 1995. Foreign investors rushed in, unleashing a 600 percent boom in emerging-market stock prices (measured in dollar terms) between 1987 and 1994. Over this period, the amount of money invested in emerging markets rose from less than one percent to nearly eight percent of the global stock-market total.

This phase ended with the economic crises that struck from Mexico to Turkey between 1994 and 2002. The stock markets of developing countries lost almost half their value and shrank to four percent of the global total. From 1987 to 2002, developing countries' share of global GDP actually fell, from 23 percent to 20 percent. The exception was China, which saw its share double, to 4.5 percent. The story of the hot emerging markets, in other words, was really about one country.

The second coming began with the global boom in 2003, when emerging markets really started to take off as a group. Their share of global GDP began a rapid climb, from 20 percent to the 34 percent that they represent today (attributable in part to the rising value of their currencies), and their share of the global stock-market total rose from less than four percent to more than ten percent. The huge losses suffered during the global financial crash of 2008 were mostly recovered in 2009, but since then, it has been slow going.

The third coming, an era that will be defined by moderate growth in the developing world, the return of the boom-bust cycle, and the breakup of herd behavior on the part of emerging-market countries, is just beginning. Without the easy money and the blue-sky optimism that fueled investment in the last decade, the stock markets of developing countries are likely to deliver more measured and uneven returns. Gains that averaged 37 percent a year between 2003 and 2007 are likely to slow to, at best, ten percent over the coming decade, as earnings growth and exchange-rate values in large emerging markets have limited scope for additional improvement after last decade's strong performance.

PAST ITS SELL-BY DATE

No idea has done more to muddle thinking about the global economy than that of the BRICs. Other than being the largest economies in their respective regions, the big four emerging markets never had much in common. They generate growth in different and often competing ways—Brazil and Russia, for example, are major energy producers that benefit from high energy prices, whereas India, as a major energy consumer, suffers from them. Except in highly unusual circumstances, such as those of the last decade, they are unlikely to grow in unison. China apart, they have limited trade ties with one another, and they have few political or foreign policy interests in common.

A problem with thinking in acronyms is that once one catches on, it tends to lock analysts into a worldview that may soon be outdated. In recent years, Russia's

economy and stock market have been among the weakest of the emerging markets, dominated by an oil-rich class of billionaires whose assets equal 20 percent of GDP, by far the largest share held by the superrich in any major economy. Although deeply out of balance, Russia remains a member of the BRICs, if only because the term sounds better with an *R*. Whether or not pundits continue using the acronym, sensible analysts and investors need to stay flexible; historically, flashy countries that grow at five percent or more for a decade—such as Venezuela in the 1950s, Pakistan in the 1960s, or Iraq in the 1970s—are usually tripped up by one threat or another (war, financial crisis, complacency, bad leadership) before they can post a second decade of strong growth.

The current fad in economic forecasting is to project so far into the future that no one will be around to hold you accountable. This approach looks back to, say, the seventeenth century, when China and India accounted for perhaps half of global GDP, and then forward to a coming "Asian century," in which such preeminence is reasserted. In fact, the longest period over which one can find clear patterns in the global economic cycle is around a decade. The typical business cycle lasts about five years, from the bottom of one downturn to the bottom of the next, and most practical investors limit their perspectives to one or two business cycles. Beyond that, forecasts are often rendered obsolete by the unanticipated appearance of new competitors, new political environments, or new technologies. Most CEOs and major investors still limit their strategic visions to three, five, or at most seven years, and they judge results on the same time frame.

THE NEW AND OLD ECONOMIC ORDER

In the decade to come, the United States, Europe, and Japan are likely to grow slowly. Their sluggishness, however, will look less worrisome compared with the even bigger story in the global economy, which will be the three to four percent slowdown in China, which is already under way, with a possibly deeper slowdown in store as the economy continues to mature. China's population is simply too big and aging too quickly for its economy to continue growing as rapidly as it has. With over 50 percent of its people now living in cities, China is nearing what economists call "the Lewis turning point": the point at which a country's surplus labor from rural areas has been largely exhausted. This is the result of both heavy migration to cities over the past two decades and the shrinking work force that the one-child policy has produced. In due time, the sense of many Americans today that Asian juggernauts are swiftly overtaking the U.S. economy will be remembered as one of the country's periodic bouts of paranoia, akin to the hype that accompanied Japan's ascent in the 1980s.

As growth slows in China and in the advanced industrial world, these countries will buy less from their export-driven counterparts, such as Brazil, Malaysia, Mexico, Russia, and Taiwan. During the boom of the last decade, the average trade balance in emerging markets nearly tripled as a share of GDP, to six percent. But since 2008, trade has fallen back to its old share of under two percent. Export-driven emerging markets will need to find new ways to achieve strong growth, and investors recognize that many will probably fail to do so: in the first half of 2012, the spread between the value of the best-performing and the value of the worst-performing major emerging stock markets shot up from ten percent to 35 percent. Over the next few years, therefore, the new normal in emerging markets will be much like the old normal of the 1950s and 1960s, when growth averaged around five percent and the race left many behind. This does not imply a reemergence of the 1970s-era Third World, consisting of uniformly underdeveloped nations. Even in those days, some emerging markets, such as South Korea and Taiwan, were starting to boom, but their success was overshadowed by the misery in larger countries, such as India. But it does mean that the economic performance of the emerging-market countries will be highly differentiated.

The uneven rise of the emerging markets will impact global politics in a number of ways. For starters, it will revive the self-confidence of the West and dim the economic and diplomatic glow of recent stars, such as Brazil and Russia (not to mention the petro-dictatorships in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East). One casualty will be the notion that China's success demonstrates the superiority of authoritarian, state-run capitalism. Of the 124 emerging-market countries that have managed to sustain a five percent growth rate for a full decade since 1980, 52 percent were democracies and 48 percent were authoritarian. At least over the short to medium term, what matters is not the type of political system a country has but rather the presence of leaders who understand and can implement the reforms required for growth.

Another casualty will be the notion of the so-called demographic dividend.

Because China's boom was driven in part by a large generation of young people entering the work force, consultants now scour census data looking for similar population bulges as an indicator of the next big economic miracle. But such demographic determinism assumes that the resulting workers will have the necessary skills to compete in the global market and that governments will set the right policies to create jobs. In the world of the last decade, when a rising tide lifted all economies, the concept of a demographic dividend briefly made sense. But that world is gone.

The economic role models of recent times will give way to new models or perhaps no models, as growth trajectories splinter off in many directions. In the past, Asian states tended to look to Japan as a paradigm, nations from the Baltics to the Balkans looked to the European Union, and nearly all countries to some extent looked to the United States. But the crisis of 2008 has undermined the credibility of all these role models. Tokyo's recent mistakes have made South Korea, which is still rising as a manufacturing powerhouse, a much more appealing Asian model than Japan. Countries that once were clamoring to enter the eurozone, such as the Czech Republic, Poland, and Turkey, now wonder if they want to join a club with so many members struggling to stay afloat. And as for the United States, the 1990s-era Washington consensus—which called for poor countries to restrain their spending and liberalize their economies—is a hard sell when even Washington can't agree to cut its own huge deficit.

Because it is easier to grow rapidly from a low starting point, it makes no sense to compare countries in different income classes. The rare breakout nations will be those that outstrip rivals in their own income class and exceed broad expectations for that class. Such expectations, moreover, will need to come back to earth. The last decade was unusual in terms of the wide scope and rapid pace of global growth, and anyone who counts on that happy situation returning soon is likely to be disappointed.

Among countries with per capita incomes in the $20,000 to $25,000 range, only two have a good chance of matching or exceeding three percent annual growth over the next decade: the Czech Republic and South Korea. Among the large group with average incomes in the $10,000 to $15,000 range, only one country—Turkey—has a good shot at matching or exceeding four to five percent growth, although Poland also has a chance. In the $5,000 to $10,000 income class, Thailand seems to be the only country with a real shot at outperforming significantly. To the extent that there will be a new crop of emerging-market stars in the coming years, therefore, it is likely to feature countries whose per capita incomes are under $5,000, such as Indonesia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and various contenders in East Africa.

Although the world can expect more breakout nations to emerge from the bottom income tier, at the top and the middle, the new global economic order will probably look more like the old one than most observers predict. The rest may continue to rise, but they will rise more slowly and unevenly than many experts are anticipating. And precious few will ever reach the income levels of the developed world.

After Qaddafi

The Surprising Success of the New Libya

Dirk Vandewalle

The September 11 killing of the U.S. ambassador to Libya, Christopher Stevens, and three other Americans during an attack by an angry mob on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi has concentrated the world's attention on the problems of post-Qaddafi Libya. The riots showcased both the power of radical Islamist militias and the inability of the government in Tripoli to provide security and maintain order across the country. Lawlessness and corruption are pervasive, and fundamental questions about the structure and operation of Libyan political and economic institutions remain unanswered. None of this, however, should obscure the fact that the larger story about the new Libya is surprisingly positive. The worst-case scenarios commonly predicted a year ago have not emerged, and there are actually grounds for guarded optimism about the future.

A year and a half ago, Libya seemed as though it would be the country where the Arab Spring came to an end. After popular uprisings peacefully unseated dictators in neighboring Tunisia and Egypt, the Libyan revolution turned into a protracted, bloody civil war. Even when the rebels, with Western assistance, finally toppled the regime of Muammar al-Qaddafi in August 2011, many obstacles lay ahead. Libyans had little sense of national identity and no experience with democracy. The country was led by a transitional government that did not have a monopoly on the use of force. To build a functional state, Libya would have to overcome the legacy of over four decades of dictatorial rule, during which Qaddafi had prevented the development of real national institutions.

Now, however, defying expectations, Libya stands out as one of the most successful countries to emerge from the uprisings that have rocked the Arab world over the past two years. On July 7, with little fanfare but great determination, Libya held its first national elections since Qaddafi's fall, in which the country's citizens peacefully voted in the new 200-member General National Congress. A month later, the National Transitional Council, which had emerged as the

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REUTERS / ESAM AL-FETORI

Free at least: celebrating the first anniversary of Qaddafi's fall, Benghazi, February 17, 2012

opposition's political leadership during the early days of the civil war, formally transferred its powers to the General National Congress. A commission will now draft the country's constitution, which will be put before the people in a popular referendum. All these developments have followed the schedule that the NTC outlined in the depths of the war. Great difficulties lie ahead, but the unexpected smoothness of Libya's political transition thus far represents a singular achievement for a country still reeling from decades of dictatorship.

What explains Libya's relative success? Many scholars saw the country's lack of institutional development as a bad sign for its future as a democracy. Yet the past year seems to suggest that Libya has actually benefited from having to virtually start from scratch in building a functioning state. Unlike in Tunisia and Egypt, where deeply entrenched institutions, such as the military and powerful bureaucracies, have proved so resistant to reform, Tripoli's new leaders have not needed to dismantle large institutional remnants of the old order.

Libya's recent accomplishments mark only the beginning of what promises to be a long and difficult process of repairing a war-torn country. But if the July elections are any indication, most Libyans are determined to build a political community that respects differences of opinion and resolves disputes through democratic processes—something they have never before enjoyed.

TAKE THE BAD WITH THE GOOD

Following Qaddafi's fall, few observers

predicted that Libya, with its troubled history, would emerge as a successful state. The Libyan monarchy, which ruled from 1951 to 1969, did little to smooth over the mutual suspicions that still divide Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, and Fezzan, the country's three historical provinces, which formed the kingdom of Libya. King Idris also failed to create any national institutions beyond the most basic machinery of a modern state, as hefty oil wealth came to dominate the country's economy and politics. When Qaddafi ousted Idris in 1969, he consolidated power and eviscerated the few national institutions, such as the country's weak army, that the kingdom had managed to nurture.

During the recent civil war, events such as the July 2011 assassination of one of the rebels' main military commanders, Abdul Fattah Younes, by an anti-Qaddafi militia, and the resulting chaos within the opposition, seemed to demonstrate that the NTC would also prove incapable of mending these historical fractures. Even after the rebels' victory, scores of powerful militias—some consisting of genuine revolutionary fighters, others simply of armed thugs—threatened the transitional government's control over the country. So pervasive was the pessimism about Libya's future that a number of international and local media outlets, including the *Libya Herald*, the country's flagship English-language newspaper, regularly suggested that Libya would become the world's next failed state, torn asunder by its tribal and regional rivalries and corrupted by both oil money and the same divide-and-rule politics that had kept the previous regime entrenched for over four decades.

Although Libya has not imploded, lawlessness—as Stevens' killing suggests—and corruption persist. *Thuwar* (revolutionaries) are still taking the law into their own hands. Members of rogue militias have tortured and abused detainees they arrested during the civil war. The cities are still plagued by banditry and Mafia-like protection schemes. In the southern part of the country, local Libyan tribes are fighting against Tubu groups over control of the lucrative cross-border trafficking of goods, which the government seems unable to contain. Alarmingly, much of this smuggling involves weapons, including heat-seeking missiles and rocket-propelled grenades, looted from Qaddafi-era depots.

Perhaps most worrisome, the government has taken too few steps toward ensuring transitional justice and reconciliation, an issue that was barely part of the political debate leading up to the July elections. Thousands of suspected Qaddafi loyalists and innocent people, citizens and noncitizens alike, still sit in jails controlled not by the government but by militias or local security groups. Many of their members seem to care more about settling personal scores than meting out justice. In particular, the displacement and mistreatment of the Tawerghans, a minority group that was expelled from its hometown near Misratah on charges of having committed atrocities at the behest of the Qaddafi regime, stands out as a black mark against the new government.

A closer look at what Libya has accomplished, however, yields a more optimistic picture. The NTC's ability to organize national elections and its willingness to hand over power to an elected national congress in August indicate that Libya

has started to construct meaningful political institutions. The elections may not have been perfect in every respect; in the eastern part of the country, there were reports that some ballot boxes had been destroyed. But they were still met with the widespread approval of approximately 27,000 local and international observers. Ultimately, the elections promise to boost the public's confidence in their current leaders, providing the new government with the popular legitimacy that its predecessor lacked.

Slowly but surely, Libya is becoming a more integrated country with a national government able to act effectively. Libya's central authorities have expanded their power at the expense of many of the militias that still dispute Tripoli's control over the country. All of Libya's schools have reopened. Retail business is flourishing as never before; after months of inactivity, Tripoli's souk is once again full of vendors until late in the evening. The new government has begun to reorganize the bureaucracy, which continues to operate even as it struggles to move beyond the mess left by Qaddafi. Courts have started to function more independently; in June, for example, the Supreme Court overturned a landmark law passed by the NTC that seemed aimed at muzzling free expression. Meanwhile, hundreds of new civil-society organizations and media outlets have sprung up. Having been denied a voice for 42 years, Libya's citizens are now claiming, and exercising, their rights to organize and express themselves.

Most important, perhaps, is the fact that Libyans now seem to share the conviction that their country is free and, despite all its internal disagreements, indivisible. Even though the supporters of federalism

in Cyrenaica continue to push for a degree of autonomy and other groups are arguing for special privileges, their campaigns show no signs of tearing the country apart. The federalist movement in Cyrenaica, now consolidated around a political party, has attracted few supporters and is fragmenting as time passes. And the need to market the country's oil through an integrated physical infrastructure and unified bureaucratic management has, as in the past, tied Libya closer together.

Meanwhile, the power of the country's militias is slowly eroding. Some armed groups have been integrated into national institutions, such as the police and the army, or trained for civilian jobs. According to unofficial estimates in the Libyan media, roughly 250,000 more people will be trained within the next year. Libya's new leaders realize that bringing the militias under control will be a drawn-out process that, for the foreseeable future, will rely on government payoffs as much as on persuasion. As the government doles out financial incentives to the militias, it will need to walk a fine line, ensuring that temporary handouts do not turn into permanent entitlements. Only then can it avoid the kind of patronage politics that became an ingrained feature of life during the Qaddafi years and created entrenched special interests.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE ELECTING

To solidify its gains, and despite the government's still-limited capabilities, Libya must quickly move to further develop its nascent security, political, and economic institutions. As the July elections demonstrated, the country's political system has plenty of growing to do. Parties struggled to articulate coherent platforms and so came to be defined by individuals rather than ideas. The public seemed to have only a rudimentary understanding of the country's political processes and procedures.

None of these shortcomings were helped by an electoral system that was deliberately designed to ensure that no political group would dominate. Out of the 200 seats in the General National Congress, 80 were filled by proportional representation according to each party's share of the vote, and the rest were given to individuals who won direct elections. In addition, the party candidates, who filled the 80 proportional seats, were elected by a single nontransferable voting system, which tends to favor individual candidates at the expense of party development and coherence. In theory, the presence of a large number of independent legislators could necessitate compromise and the formation of coalitions in the new body. But in light of Libya's history of factionalism, such a system might lead only to gridlock.

In the party vote, the National Forces Alliance, led by the former NTC leader Mahmoud Jibril, routed the Muslim Brotherhood–affiliated Justice and Development Party. Jibril's prominence, earned during the civil war, gave his coalition a much higher level of visibility, which translated into ready votes. A number of Western commentators quickly began celebrating the defeat of Libya's Islamists by Jibril's allegedly secular coalition. But such celebrations are premature. The truth is that all of Libya's political parties, including Jibril's, maintain Islam as part of their political programs; they differ only on what precise role they assign religion in everyday life.

The Justice and Development Party's weak performance, moreover, had less to do with ideology than with the fact that Qaddafi had effectively eradicated the Brotherhood in Libya, leaving it with few organizational resources in the wake of the civil war.

In future elections, as memories of the NTC and its leaders start to fade and as the Justice and Development Party and other Islamist parties organize themselves better and develop more sophisticated and detailed platforms, Islamists will likely gain ground in Libyan politics. That said, most Libyans seem dedicated to preventing any single party or political movement from dominating their newly democratic government.

The larger challenge for Libya will be fostering a true political community. Unlike in much of the West, where countries with cogent national identities developed into electoral democracies, Libya will have to construct a national identity out of its newly formed democracy. Central to this effort will be the writing of a constitution, a social contract that can turn the unspecified and informal politics of the Qaddafi period into explicit rules. In the coming months, Libya's constitutional committee, whose members hail equally from the country's three historical provinces, will need to create an institutional design that entices Libya's diverse groups to buy into a truly national project.

A WELL-OILED MACHINE

Libya's new leaders must also find better ways to manage the country's oil resources and its economy. Qaddafi was able to perpetuate his rule by abusing these resources and creating a highly centralized

but virtually unregulated economy that now suffers from all the consequences of long-term neglect: a lack of entrepreneurship; a bloated public sector that served as the employer of first and last resort and at one time employed up to 80 percent of the active labor force; weak health-care and educational systems; unaddressed environmental problems; and decaying infrastructure, from government-owned housing to roads and oil pipelines.

Libya's economy is also not adequately diversified, and its oil sector cannot begin to create enough jobs to put the country's many unemployed and underemployed youth to work. On paper, the country's short-term economic numbers look good. Oil production has returned, more or less, to where it stood before the civil war, and officials at the National Oil Corporation project that Libya will produce an additional one million barrels per day within two years. According to a report by Business Monitor International, Libya's real GDP is expected to have risen by approximately 59 percent in 2012, after a roughly 49 percent drop in 2011. But these encouraging projections hide the fact that without major economic reforms, Libya will not be able to move beyond its status as a rentier state.

Jump-starting and diversifying the economy will require Tripoli to both promote entrepreneurship through government programs and reverse the effects of decades of oil-based patronage politics. These effects include widespread corruption and a young population with a strong sense of entitlement and a weak work ethic. To tackle these problems, ironically, Libya's new leaders must forcefully intervene in the market now to reduce the state's presence in economic affairs over the long run. The experiences of other oil-rich countries that have emerged from civil wars, such as Nigeria, demonstrate that unless patterns of patronage are forcefully stamped out early on, they soon reassert themselves. Old elites tend to reconsolidate their power. These patterns can be avoided only by increasing transparency and good governance and by expanding the population's access to the economy.

Fortunately, Libyan policymakers understand the need to move away from the country's previous unproductive development model and to more efficiently manage oil revenues. Even during the civil war, the Dubai-based Libya Stabilization Team, which served as a sort of think tank for the rebellion's leadership, focused on smarter economic planning. And the subject continues to drive Libya's interactions with international financial institutions. Because oil revenues can be easily diverted and used for patronage, however, the government will need to keep a firm hand on the tiller.

A STATE IS BORN

Building a state and fostering a national identity take time and good leadership—bold ideas, initiative, and the willingness to compromise. This especially holds true in Libya, where none of those qualities were much in demand during the past four decades. Perhaps because elite cliques and self-serving strongmen dominated Arab politics for so long, academic and policy circles in the West have tended to disregard the importance of good leadership in the region. Here, too, Libya has proved to be a pleasant exception and surprise.

To be sure, in the months leading up to the elections, the NTC largely failed to pass

meaningful legislation and implemented somewhat arbitrary decisions. Law 36, for example, which targeted the assets of individuals with ties to Qaddafi, was a rushed, politically expedient measure that eventually had to be amended. At the August transfer of power to the General National Congress, the head of the NTC, Mustafa Abdel Jalil, admitted some of his failures, particularly in restoring security to the country. But he also pointed out that the country's interim authority had governed in "exceptional times." And for that reason, many Libyans, even those who have publicly disagreed with the NTC, share a measure of respect for what its members have accomplished.

The tasks ahead for the Libyan government are as daunting as they are numerous: providing security and order, balancing central and regional power, expanding and strengthening the rule of law, providing for transitional justice, strengthening human rights, and fostering a sense of national identity among all Libyans. In tackling these challenges, Libya will undoubtedly experience setbacks, when even the most optimistic will question what progress has been made. The recent attacks by Islamist groups on Sufi shrines, for example, have demonstrated how profound religious differences in Libya will continue to hamper the creation of a harmonious political community. But the larger picture of the transition should still inspire hope. Just a year after the fall of a dictatorship that deprived Libyans of any political role, a modern state has, against all odds, started to emerge.

If this progress continues to take root, resulting in solid institutions, Libya may well prove to be an important exception to the so-called resource curse: the seemingly immutable rule that oil-exporting countries are bound for authoritarianism and stagnation. What is more, Libya may also demonstrate the value of starting from scratch when rebuilding a war-torn country. No one could have predicted that out of the bleak ruins of the Qaddafi regime and a bloody civil war, Libya would be able to design an effective and inclusive government—and yet most signs indicate that it is doing so. Libya's leaders have been offered a chance that few successful revolutionaries get: to start anew, with ample financial resources and the freedom to build a state as they see fit.

As the new Libya emerges, the West must continue to play a crucial supporting role, much as it did during the civil war. Stevens' death should not deter the United States from working closely with Tripoli, for the ambassador himself understood that only U.S. engagement can provide the expertise and support Libya needs to solidify its young democracy.

Revenge of the Kurds

Breaking Away From Baghdad

Joost R. Hiltermann

The mood in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Dohuk—the three largest cities in Iraqi Kurdistan—is newly buoyant these days, and with good reason. Iraq's Kurds, who occupy the semiautonomous region run by the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), have much to celebrate. They enjoy relative peace and stability compared with the rest of the country, boast a moderately open society, and, over the past year, have received a whopping vote of confidence in their nascent economy from some of the world's largest oil companies, including ExxonMobil, Chevron, Total, and Gazprom, all of which have signed exploration contracts with the KRG. Not only is Iraqi Kurdistan undergoing an unprecedented building boom, but its people are now articulating a once-unthinkable notion: that the day they will break free from the rest of Iraq is nigh.

As the Kurds press forward, they are growing increasingly estranged from the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki; personal relations between Maliki and the Kurdish regional president, Massoud Barzani, have reached an all-time low, keeping them from resolving critical disputes over power, territory, and resources. This past June, Barzani and other opponents of Maliki tried to oust the prime minister through a vote of no confidence, and although they failed to do so, their ambition remains very much alive.

The Kurds are victims of history, geography, and, on the occasions they overreach, their own ambitions. For almost a century, they have struggled to free themselves from central control and to overcome their landlocked location. Today, a rapidly changing region is presenting them with new allies and fresh opportunities. Yet there is good reason to think that the Kurds will have to defer their quest for statehood once again, at most trading Baghdad's suffocating embrace for a more amenable dependence on Turkey.

DREAMS DEFERRED

The Kurds' troubles started almost a century ago. When the Ottoman Empire was

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carved up after World War I, the Kurds, who had constituted a major ethnic group within that empire, were divided among Turkey, Iran, Syria (under a French mandate), and Iraq (under a British one). The new rump Turkey determined that it could not afford to have an autonomous, much less independent, Kurdistan on its eastern flank, so it worked hard to keep most of the Kurdish homeland under its direct control.

Great-power wrangling offered the Kurds a brief moment of hope in 1920, when the Allied powers sealed the Ottoman Empire's fate with the Treaty of Sèvres. That pact provided for the possibility of full Kurdish independence following a period of autonomy. But the treaty was never ratified, and three years later it was replaced by the Treaty of Lausanne, which made no mention of the Kurds. The new Turkish republic was forced to cede most of what is now northern Iraq to the United Kingdom's new Iraqi state in 1926. To this day, the Kurds feel deeply betrayed by the victorious powers that abandoned them during the postwar free-for-all.

In the decades that followed World War I, the Kurdish quest for statehood was suppressed, often violently. Whenever Iraq's central government was weak as a result of internal turmoil—for example, during the 1958 overthrow of the monarchy, the 1968 Baathist coup, or the 1980–88 Iran-Iraq War—the Kurds pressed forward. And whenever they forged deals with Baghdad, they were quickly put back in their place by counterinsurgency offensives that killed thousands and left their villages in ruins. The worst came in the waning days of Iraq's conflict with Iran, when Saddam Hussein's regime employed poison gas against Kurdish fighters and civilians and unleashed a genocidal campaign, known as the Anfal, in which tens of thousands were systematically murdered.

The Kurds caught a break in 1991, in the aftermath of the Gulf War. U.S. President George H. W. Bush had encouraged the Kurds and the Shiites to take up arms against Saddam but never lent U.S. military support to their cause. When Saddam brutally suppressed the resulting uprising, the Gulf War allies imposed a no-fly zone and established a safe haven in northern Iraq, giving the Kurds international protection for the first time.

It proved to be their first real window of opportunity, and they quickly took advantage of it. In 1992, with international help, the Kurds organized parliamentary elections, reviving the autonomous legislature that the Baathist regime had authorized in its early days, and set up a modicum of self-government. The project was an uphill battle: the Kurds suffered an internecine conflict between their two major political parties, they controlled a landlocked territory, and the neighbor they depended on most as an outlet to the world, Turkey, feared that the Iraqi Kurds' experiment with self-rule would inspire its own Kurdish minority. The Turkish government placed a de facto embargo on the region, permitting only humanitarian aid to pass through its border, not the resources the Kurds needed to rebuild their devastated society.

When the United States invaded Iraq in 2003, another window opened for the Kurds. With Saddam's regime gone, the Iraqi Kurds, along with returning Iraqi exiles, had the rare chance to forge a new

Iraq: democratic, pluralistic, and decentralized. The experiment worked for a brief while, but the United States' inexperience in state building, cultural ignorance, heavy-handed management, and high turnover in personnel got in the way. These factors produced a profoundly dysfunctional political and constitutional transition, which eventually drove the Kurds away from the central government, even as their newfound influence enabled them to occupy some of its most senior positions: since 2006, Iraq's president, one of its deputy prime ministers, its foreign minister, and its army chief of staff have all been Kurds.

During the transition, the Kurds made it clear that they would stay committed to the new Iraq only if it was federal and democratic and only if it treated them as full partners, not as a minority to be kept pacified in a semiautonomous region. What they got instead was a regime in Baghdad that in some respects looked much like Saddam's. The new government had all the nepotism of the old one, mutual distrust and fear continued to contaminate politics, the state remained profoundly centralized, and many ordinary citizens seemed to accept a measure of authoritarian rule as the price of stability. The region the Kurds controlled may have suffered from many of the same flaws, but this was not the kind of Iraq they wanted to be a part of.

Instead, their real aspiration remained to build an independent Kurdistan. And so even as the Kurds assumed an active role in the new Iraqi enterprise, they began quietly laying the foundations for a future state of their own, including helping draft Iraq's new, permanent constitution, which gave them significant autonomy. Then, in 2005, the Sunni-Shiite street war erupted, which further diminished the appeal of involvement in Baghdad. So did the subsequent rise of Maliki, who became more and more autocratic and locked horns with the Kurds over a range of issues. Momentum for an independent Kurdistan accelerated.

From the Kurdish perspective, things took another turn for the worse in 2007, with the "surge" of U.S. troops. As part of its renewed commitment to making things work in Iraq, the United States began empowering Sunni Arabs to stand up to the insurgents and pressed the Kurds into power-sharing deals with the very people they had accused of ethnic cleansing during the Saddam era. Washington's position was that the Kurds should help preserve Iraqi unity by learning to work with the government in Baghdad. The Kurds went through the motions but continued working toward independence. They supported legislation, both in Baghdad and in the Kurdish region, that threatened to further weaken central control, especially with respect to federal arrangements for other provinces and, most importantly, oil.

PETRO-POLITICS

As they progressively gave up on the idea of a unified Iraq, the Kurds began exploiting their most promising asset: the vast reserves of crude oil and natural gas that lie beneath their territory. In 2007, after negotiations with Baghdad over a federal oil and gas law broke down, Iraqi Kurdistan started developing its own hydrocarbon sector in defiance of the federal government. Some small wildcatters had already begun exploring there, but now the region was starting to attract medium-sized companies from around the world, including U.S.

SOURCE: International Crisis Group, 2012.

ones, such as Hunt Oil, HKN, Marathon Oil, Murphy Oil, and Hess. Baghdad challenged the KRG's right to sign independent contracts with oil companies that wanted to start prospecting in Kurdistan and took issue with the KRG's quest to incorporate disputed oil- and gas-rich territories into the Kurdish region, especially the province of Kirkuk. Although the two sides agreed on the principle of revenue sharing, the Kurds insisted on the right to sign contracts, seeking an independent income stream to get around an unreliable and sometimes even hostile Baghdad. Moreover, the presence of major oil fields could provide the region with the sort of economic leverage that would enable statehood down the road.

Even as their relationship with Baghdad frayed, the Kurds remained thoroughly dependent on the central government, receiving a 17 percent share of the federal budget annually, the bulk

of which they spent on public-sector salaries. Moreover, as some oil fields reached the point of production, the Kurds faced the reality that, for now at least, the only way to get their product to market was to send it through an existing pipeline that ran outside the Kurdish region's boundaries, from the city of Kirkuk to the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan. In other words, they would need Baghdad's consent to sell their most valuable export. But even though the income from the oil would accrue to the national treasury, the Maliki government rejected not only the KRG's right to sign contracts but also the nature of the contracts, which gave the signing companies a share of the oil.

In 2009, with both needing revenues as global oil prices plummeted, the two sides reached an interim agreement, and the Kurds started pumping oil through the Iraqi pipeline. So began a period of stop-and-go progress on the oil issue. The first deal lasted for only a few months, unraveling as the Kurds faced financial pressure from the producing companies seeking to recover their costs, which Baghdad said the KRG should pay from its own annual federal budget allocation. A year later, as Kurdistan's production potential increased, Baghdad and the KRG struck a new deal under which the Kurds would produce 100,000 barrels a day in 2011 (and 175,000 a day in 2012) and the federal government would compensate the producing companies for their investments. But this arrangement also proved short-lived, breaking down over a dispute concerning the oil companies' expense receipts.

That latest fight proved the final straw for the KRG. This past April, at the same time as opposition to Maliki's autocratic style was growing, the KRG suspended oil exports through the Iraqi pipeline. (Private Kurdish traders continued to truck fuel oil into Iran, however, providing some revenue to the KRG.) Shortly afterward, Barzani hosted a meeting of Maliki's opponents, all nominal partners in the coalition government. Their intent was to unseat the prime minister through a vote of no confidence if he continued to renege on the power-sharing promises he had made when he formed his government at the end of 2010, after being elected to a second term.

Barzani apparently believed he had the upper hand. ExxonMobil had signed an exploration contract with the KRG in October 2011—the first major oil company to do so—in a move that infuriated the Maliki government, which threatened the company with sanctions. Although the Kurds have yet to find an easy way to export their oil, ExxonMobil's arrival gave them renewed confidence and bolstered their argument that billions of barrels of marketable oil cannot be kept bottled up; their sheer value would force Baghdad to agree to an export deal. Moreover, Turkey was increasingly presenting itself as a potential buyer of Kurdish crude, even suggesting that it would be prepared to bypass Baghdad once the requisite pipelines existed. Relations between Maliki and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, already frayed over Iraq's support for the Syrian regime against the ongoing uprising, took another hit.

The Kurds had overreached, however. They failed to dethrone Maliki, who enjoyed the tacit support of both Iran and the United States. And they discov-

ered that the federal government, which was producing more barrels of oil per day by July 2012 than at any time in the previous ten years, would not budge on the question of payments to the oil companies. As punishment, Maliki threatened to reduce the KRG's budget allocation by the amount of money the central government was losing to the Kurds' oil export boycott and private trading of fuel oil to Iran. By early August, the Obama administration, concerned that reduced oil exports from Iraq could push up gasoline prices, was pressuring the Kurds to end their stand. Without winning any concessions on payments to the oil companies from Baghdad, the KRG caved and reopened the valves. By mid-September, the two sides had reaffirmed their original deal, but this hardly extracted the KRG from the situation it had been hoping to escape by exploiting the region's hydrocarbon wealth: it remains financially dependent on a federal government that, for now, holds the better cards.

TURKEY'S TURN

Relations between Barzani and Maliki are unlikely to improve, and the Kurdish leader is increasingly looking to Turkey for salvation, despite that country's own dismal record on Kurdish rights. Although Turkey has long supported Iraq's territorial unity as a barrier against Iranian influence and as a check against secessionist impulses among its own Kurdish population, the Erdogan government has recently begun to shift strategies. Since 2008, it has forged a close economic bond with the KRG by opening its border and encouraging Turkish investments in the Kurdish region, and its relations with Baghdad have deteriorated due to Maliki's authoritarian turn and the

growing perception in Ankara that Maliki is serving as a proxy for Iran.

The question is how far Turkish leaders will go—whether they will be prepared to abandon their Plan A, reinforcing a unified Iraq, for Plan B, linking up with entities estranged from Baghdad, such as the Kurds and the largely Sunni provinces in northern Iraq, at the risk of breaking up Iraq. Already, the rhetoric in Ankara has changed. Officials no longer refer to Iraq's unity as a sine qua non; now, it is a "preference." And Erdogan is said to have promised Barzani that Turkish forces will protect the Kurdish region in the event of a military assault from Baghdad. Even if the unannounced visit that Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu made to the contested city of Kirkuk in August wasn't meant to signal support for the Kurds' territorial claims in Iraq, Baghdad's furious reaction showed that it was received that way. Maliki has announced plans to establish a new military headquarters in Kirkuk, and there are other unsettling signs of the city's growing militarization. Barzani, for his part, is offering Turkey powerful incentives to turn away from Baghdad: a regular flow of more than one million barrels of oil a day through a set of direct pipelines now under construction, a stable Sunni Kurdish buffer on Turkey's southeastern border against Maliki's Shiite-dominated government, and the KRG's help in blocking Kurdish rebels from expanding into Kurdish areas of Syria.

For Turkey, however, the risks of throwing its support behind Iraq's Kurds would be enormous. A disintegrating Iraq would strengthen Iran's quest for regional dominance, and an independent Iraqi Kurdistan would further empower Turkey's own Kurdish minority. Turkish leaders face a serious dilemma. They cannot predict the outcome of the crisis in Syria or to what extent Kurds throughout the four countries they inhabit will be empowered by it. Turkey urgently needs access to Iraq's energy resources, and as long as its relations with Baghdad remain in the doldrums, Ankara appears ready to buy oil directly from the Kurds without a green light from the Maliki government. Such a move would help the Kurdish region gain more autonomy from Baghdad and give it leverage over Ankara, but it will not produce a state. In the end, the Kurds will remain stuck in Iraq, but more and more on their own terms. Given their troubled history, this is serious progress, and it offers a foundation on which to build something even better.

Mexico's Age of Agreement

A Mandate for Reform

Héctor Aguilar Camín and Jorge G. Castañeda

Mexico has long been hostage to unchallengeable traditions: its nationalist approach to oil wealth, overly sensitive attitude toward sovereignty, entrenched labor monopolies, persistent corruption, and self-serving bureaucracy. Acquired over time, these attitudes and practices became cemented in the national soul and embedded in the habits of the government and society, sapping the country's potential.

The good news is that all of this is rapidly changing, as Mexico leaves behind its hefty psychological baggage. Yes, the last 15 years, a time of too little economic growth and too few reforms, have been frustrating, especially for those who expected the transition to democracy to solve everything. But these years have unveiled a new national consensus: a broad agreement on values that, despite seeming normal for any other modern democracy, did not figure clearly in the Mexican public consciousness until very recently.

The vast majority of Mexicans now agree that the only way politicians should get and keep power is through the ballot box and that the clamor for greater accountability and less corruption is legitimate. They believe that protecting human rights, adhering to the rule of law, and ending the culture of impunity are nonnegotiable goals. They demand due process rights and greater security, and they think poverty and social inequality must be reduced, along with the influence of Mexico's powerful monopolies and oligopolies. Yet they also reject any macroeconomic policy associated with large public deficits and consider the advantages of globalization, free trade, and economic integration with the rest of North America greater than the drawbacks.

This new paradigm has slowly displaced the revolutionary nationalism engendered by the centrist Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which held the presidency from 1929 until it was defeated in 2000 by the

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conservative National Action Party (PAN). In elections this past July, the PRI retook the executive branch when Enrique Peña Nieto resoundingly beat the PAN presidential candidate and the left-wing Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) made a surprisingly strong showing. This outcome was superficially disconcerting: the campaign was bitter, the winning candidate obtained only 38 percent of the vote, his party failed to win a majority in either house of Congress, and the left fell just short of winning enough seats to block constitutional reform. But the presidential campaign also revealed just how many things Mexicans now agree on, and the elections, despite their muddled result, may actually point to a more promising future. Mexican politicians could now be on the verge of finally passing dearly needed reforms that have been postponed for far too long.

ADIÓS, AUTHORITARIANISM

More than anything else, the PRI was thrown out of office in 2000 because of its fiscal irresponsibility and cronyism, which had led to the horrendous economic crises of 1976, 1982, 1987, and 1994. Yet Mexicans need not fear a revival of that ancien régime. Democracy destroyed its centerpiece: a single party with a constitutional majority in both houses of Congress, led by a president lacking counterweights in any other branch of government.

Still, old-fashioned corruption continues to dominate local politics. Huge public-sector labor unions are stronger, more autonomous, and more inefficient than ever; so, too, are other public and private monopolies. None of these groups has been subjected to the rule of law or democratic presidential authority.

Paradoxically, however, these very interests are now helping prevent a return to the presidential omnipotence that once supported them. No one in Mexico wants a powerful president: not local authorities, who wish to avoid the central government's budgetary oversight, not the unions, which want to keep their monopoly on hiring and firing and on collective bargaining, and not the country's major businesses, which fear any kind of antitrust legislation. Voters don't want a strong executive, either. Since 1997, they have denied four consecutive heads of state a legislative majority. This sentiment alone should be sufficient to prevent the reemergence of a populist government that would plunge the country once again into the budgetary fiestas and austerity hangovers that felled the PRI.

There are other reasons for optimism. The PRI may not have reinvented itself entirely, but Mexico has. Peña Nieto will be the first president who came of age professionally in a democratic Mexico. He was barely two years old at the time of the old system's darkest moment, the 1968 government massacre of student protesters, and was 28 when his country held its first more or less democratic election, in 1994.

Peña Nieto will also be the first PRI president not handpicked by his predecessor; every PRI candidate since 1934 was appointed by the outgoing president, then rubber-stamped in a sham election. No one can guarantee Peña Nieto's democratic convictions, but when it comes to creating a sense of accountability, being chosen is not the same as being elected. Besides, Peña Nieto lacks a majority in both houses of Congress; the left-of-center PRD will continue to control the

REUTERS / EDGARD GARRIDO

It's my party: Enrique Peña Nieto, shortly before his election, campaigning in Toluca, June 27, 2012

country's second most important elected position, the mayoralty of Mexico City, which it has held since 1997.

What's more, the new president will have to coexist with a thicket of institutions that have recently won substantial autonomy from the executive branch: the central bank, the Federal Institute for Access to Public Information, the National Institute of Statistics, and the agencies that regulate elections, finance, telecommunications, trade, and prescription drugs. Most important, for the first time in its history, the country has a truly independent and potent supreme court, which made life miserable for former Presidents Vicente Fox and Felipe Calderón but better for ordinary Mexicans. Neither Peña Nieto nor anyone else will find it easy to tame these new bureaucracies.

Mexico has also transformed its relations with the rest of the world. The country has entangled itself in a web of free-trade agreements and other international treaties with human rights and democracy clauses that have locked in its open economy, its orthodox macroeconomic policies, and its commitment to democratic rule. Mexico has signed and ratified a myriad other international conventions since 1998 that subject it to constant foreign appraisal. If reempowered PRI officials try to use their positions to get rich, foreign and domestic whistleblowers stand ready to denounce them, just as they did under Fox and Calderón.

More broadly, the environment in which Mexico's politicians operate has changed immensely since the early 1990s. Mexico's media outlets are freer, better, and

stronger than ever. Civil society has become more organized, powerful, and vibrant. For better or for worse, the government can no longer do what it wants.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

These forces of accountability should keep the PRI government on track to pursue the policies it has promised. More than ever before, the PRI and the PAN, and their supporters, agree on what reforms are needed—so much so that the two parties could join forces to enact them.

Several weeks before the July elections, a group of Mexicans from different professional, political, regional, and generational backgrounds posed questions to each presidential candidate. All four replied in writing, and their answers revealed a clear wish to accelerate change, not restrict it. The candidates agreed that Mexico needs a better police force with more officers and that the military's role in domestic security should recede. They all wanted to create a national anticorruption commission. They all supported subjecting teachers and other school employees to independent evaluation. They all promised to eliminate tax exemptions and loopholes. And they all said that Mexico's prosecutorial machinery should be totally autonomous. In addition, three of the four candidates—Peña Nieto, Josefina Vázquez Mota of the PAN, and Gabriel Quadri of the New Alliance Party—who together obtained nearly 70 percent of the vote, agreed on three other fundamental reforms. They supported opening up Pemex, the state-owned oil company, to private investment; encouraging public-private partnerships for infrastructure investment; and creating a universal social-protection system that would include health care, social security, and unemployment insurance.

The commonalities bewteen the PRI and the PRD, however, are practically nonexistent. Andrés Manuel López Obrador, the PRD candidate who lost to Peña Nieto, has accused Peña Nieto of buying votes and will in all likelihood oppose his reforms, even if some of the PRD's backers might support them. Traditionally, the PRD has sat on the sidelines of national politics, limiting itself to contesting the government's strategic decisions. It has led only—and this is no small matter—by passing liberal lifestyle legislation in Mexico City, such as laws allowing abortion and same-sex marriage.

Despite the PRD's opposition, the overlap between the PRI's and the PAN's agendas could turn Mexican voters' shared preferences into actual policies. The two parties first banded together in 1988, after the left unleashed mass protests against that year's grossly manipulated elections. That reaction convinced the PRI and the PAN that if they did not embrace a modernizing platform, they would both lose the next election. So the two parties fleshed out the terms of an institutional transition to democracy, a plan for full-throttled liberalization of the economy, a way to end land reform, and the preparations needed for NAFTA. Since then, no reform of any magnitude in Mexico has been passed without negotiations between the PRI and the PAN, and their frequent disagreements have only slowed the country down.

Today, in contrast, the two parties can forge an alliance on a number of long-delayed reforms. On oil—an emblematic issue in Mexico since the

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country nationalized its petroleum industry, in 1938—the left is opposed to changing the current laws, but the PAN and Peña Nieto both support a constitutional amendment allowing private investment in Pemex. Passing that would attract badly needed foreign capital and represent a giant legal and psychological leap forward for Mexico.

The PAN and the PRI also agree on the dire need for a sustained campaign of trust busting. Politicians from both parties have argued that Mexico must reduce its concentration of power and wealth through a vigorous push against all breeds of monopolies—public and private, economic and political, and in industry, banking, telecommunications, labor, and the media.

On the war against organized crime, too, the PRI and the PAN share a strategy. During this year's campaign, Peña Nieto and Vázquez Mota called for two important changes to Calderón's approach. First, they advocated concentrating scarce resources on combating violence—preventing kidnapping, extortion, and murder—rather than on capturing kingpins or interdicting U.S.-bound drug shipments. Second, they proposed overhauling Mexico's law enforcement system and increasing the federal police force from about 30,000 officers to some 100,000 officers over three years.

During the 2012 campaign, more than 66 percent of the seats in Congress—the threshold needed to approve constitutional amendments—were won by candidates who agreed on these issues and others.

LET'S MAKE A DEAL

The PRI and the PAN don't see eye to eye on everything, however. Peña Nieto has stressed his intention to build a universal social-protection system financed by the central tax fund as opposed to individual contributions, which would mean raising Mexico's value-added tax and eliminating energy subsidies; the PAN is not quite convinced.

Although both Peña Nieto and Vázquez Mota said they would continue to cooperate closely with Washington in the war on drugs, the PRI may want to distance itself from aspects of Calderón's strategy, something that any winner in 2012 would probably have done. Some pollsters believe that the main reason the PAN fared so poorly in the elections was because of its unpopular antidrug campaign, an expensive undertaking that has resulted in more than 60,000 deaths since 2007, visible human rights violations, and severe damage to Mexico's image abroad. Given the huge costs of the war, there are no easy areas of convergence between the outgoing team responsible for the current state of affairs and an incoming administration seeking a break with the past. In fact, the PAN probably remains split on this issue, as do the PRI and the Mexican public.

The PAN, for its part, has called for several major reforms that Peña Nieto dislikes. The party wants to allow mayors and legislators to serve consecutive terms, a practice that has been outlawed for nearly a century, and has recommended adding a runoff round to the presidential election so that the next president would need more than the 38 percent of the vote that Peña Nieto got in order to win. (Peña Nieto fears that such a change would allow the left and the right to join forces to defeat his party.) The PAN has also proposed transforming public-sector

unions by stopping automatic dues collection, ending the government's recognition of unions and its ownership of collective-bargaining rights, and banning unions from firing employees who do not submit to their points of view.

These disagreements between the PRI and the PAN provide an opportunity for a deal: Peña Nieto could accept the electoral changes he opposes in exchange for the PAN's support for the unpopular but beneficial reforms the PRI blocked during the two PAN presidencies, such as liberalizing the labor market, permitting private investment in the energy sector, closing tax loopholes, and raising tax rates to finance a new social safety net. The stage is set for PRI and PAN politicians, during the tail end of Calderón's administration and the first months of Peña Nieto's administration, to construct a substantive agenda and a constitutional majority for its approval.

In the past, Mexico's five-month interval between elections and inauguration—a long period of awkward coexistence between the lame-duck government and the incoming administration—has led to currency devaluations, mass demonstrations, expropriations, internal power struggles, and even rumors of a coup. This time, however, the PRI and the PAN have tried to negotiate a mutually beneficial and productive interregnum. They have planned for legislators to pass reforms during the congressional session between September and December that will allow the departing administration to take credit and the new government to hit the ground running.

The legislative agenda includes long-term structural reforms concerning Pemex, labor laws, and taxes, but it also entails

more immediate changes responding to public concerns about corruption. The incoming administration, as noted, has proposed creating an autonomous anti-corruption commission; it has also proposed establishing another autonomous agency to transparently administer the use of public funds in the media and expanding the authority of the Federal Institute for Access to Public Information so that it can investigate state and municipal finances.

Despite the fertile political environment, mistrust left over from the campaign trail could reduce the chances of success in the planned fall session of Congress. It is difficult to conceive of how a divided government could suddenly deliver a cascade of agreements and reforms after more than a decade of virtual paralysis. But regardless of whether PRI and PAN politicians collaborate this fall, they have at least tacitly agreed on the terms of the tradeoff on which Mexico's new agenda will rest.

A NEW NARRATIVE

The more important question is not necessarily how many reforms are approved and when but rather what signals politicians send about where they want Mexico to go. One vital message they should send is that the country plans to invest in its infrastructure. Mexico needs to connect its regions and strengthen its ties to the rest of the world. It needs more ports, bridges, highways, airports, industrial clusters, preclearance zones for trade with the United States, and broadband Internet connections.

Another promising message concerns tax reform. Mexico needs to expand its tax revenues to fund a new social safety net. Without a base of consumers protected by universal health care, unemployment insurance, and social security, Mexico's domestic market and productivity will not grow fast enough to sustain a cycle of socially equitable economic expansion. The result would be more of the same: a First World exporting platform sitting on top of a Third World domestic economy.

To become prosperous, developing countries have to show that they want it badly enough; nothing would demonstrate this more than liberating the oil industry, especially the newly discovered deep-water reserves in the Gulf of Mexico. Yet Mexico has not yet made this commitment to growth. Although the country has achieved a degree of the macroeconomic stability it lacked during the last decades of the twentieth century, it has not yet attained the economic growth needed to properly support its population. The most important evil that the country must eradicate is not poverty but the mediocre creation of wealth.

More than anything else, what Mexico needs now is a credible narrative about its future. Fortunately, 12 years of democracy have finally planted a new paradigm in Mexican minds and culture. One by one, the myths that once dominated—about the need for an omnipotent president, about the wisdom of nationalizing oil reserves, about a government that gives and a society that receives—have fallen by the wayside. Mexicans' clamor for prosperity is no longer negotiable, and today, the country is less than a generation away from becoming the full-fledged middle-class society it aspires to be. But only if it gets to work now.

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Let Women Fight

Ending the U.S. Military's Female Combat Ban

Megan H. MacKenzie

Today, 214,098 women serve in the U.S. military, representing 14.6 percent of total service members. Around 280,000 women have worn American uniforms in Afghanistan and Iraq, where 144 have died and over 600 have been injured. Hundreds of female soldiers have received a Combat Action Badge, awarded for actively engaging with a hostile enemy. Two women, Sergeant Leigh Ann Hester and Specialist Monica Lin Brown, have been awarded Silver Stars—one of the highest military decorations awarded for valor in combat—for their service in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Yet the U.S. military, at least officially, still bans women from serving in direct combat positions. As irregular warfare has become increasingly common in the last few decades, the difference on the ground between the frontline and support roles is no longer clear. Numerous policy changes have also eroded the division between combat and noncombat positions. More and more military officials recognize the contributions made by female soldiers, and politicians, veterans, and military experts have all begun actively lobbying Washington to drop the ban. But Congress has not budged.

Proponents of the policy, who include Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.), former chair of the House Armed Services Committee, and former Senator Rick Santorum (R-Pa.), rely on three central arguments: that women cannot meet the physical requirements necessary to fight,

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that they simply don't belong in combat, and that their inclusion in fighting units would disrupt those units' cohesion and battle readiness. Yet these arguments do not stand up to current data on women's performance in combat or their impact on troop dynamics. Banning women from combat does not ensure military effectiveness. It only perpetuates counterproductive gender stereotypes and biases. It is time for the U.S. military to get over its hang-ups and acknowledge women's rightful place on the battlefield.

WOMEN IN A MAN'S WORLD

WOMEN HAVE long served in various auxiliary military roles during wars. Further, the 1948 Women's Armed Services Integration Act created a permanent corps of women in all the military departments. This was considered a step forward at the time, but it is also the origin of the current combat ban. The act limited women's number to two percent of total service members and formally excluded them from combat duties. The exclusion policy was reinforced in 1981, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the all-male draft did not constitute gender-based discrimination since it was intended to increase combat troops and women were already restricted from combat.

Despite this restriction, the share of women in the U.S. armed forces increased in the 1980s and 1990s, from 8.5 percent to 11.1 percent, as a result of the transition to an all-volunteer force in 1973 and high demand for troops. Today, the air force is the most open service for women. Women have been flying in combat aircrafts since 1993, and they now make up 70 of the 3,700 fighter pilots in the service.

In the rest of the military, restrictions on women have also been slipping for some time, albeit more slowly, due to an increase in female enlistment and the public's growing sensitivity to equal labor rights. In January 1994, a memorandum from then Secretary of Defense Les Aspin rescinded the "risk rule" barring women from any positions that could expose them to direct combat, hostile fire, or capture; the rule was replaced by the "direct ground combat assignment rule," which more narrowly tailored the restriction to frontline combat positions.

Recent policy changes have also blurred the distinction between combat and support roles. In 2003, the army began reorganizing units

and increasing the number of brigades within each division. Under this system, forward support companies, which provide logistical support, transportation, and maintenance to battalions, are now grouped together on the same bases as combat units. Since women are permitted to serve in such support units, a major barrier designed to keep them away from combat has almost vanished.

The assignment of women to combat-related tasks has further undermined the strength of the ban. Beginning in 2003, for example, so-called Lioness teams were deployed to assist combat units in Iraq searching women for weapons and explosives. Drawing from this model, the military created several other female-only units in 2009, including "female engagement teams." In their first year of operation, these teams conducted over 70 short-term search-and-engagement missions in Afghanistan. Paying lip service to the exclusion policy, the military specified that these units could not contribute to hunt-and-kill foot patrols and should stay at combat bases only temporarily. In practice, however, this meant that female soldiers were required to leave their combat bases for one night every six weeks before immediately returning. Not only did this practice put women at risk with unnecessary travel in an insecure environment; it also exemplifies the waste and hardship that the preservation of the formal ban imposes on the military.

Meanwhile, the U.S. military is finding different ways to recognize the fact that women now fight in the country's wars. Members of forward support companies and female engagement teams now receive combat pay, also known as "hostile fire" or "imminent danger" pay, acknowledging the threats women regularly face. And 78 percent of the deaths of female U.S. service members in Iraq were categorized as hostile, yet another sign of how American women in uniform regularly put their lives at risk.

In light of all these changes, in 2011 the Military Leadership Diversity Commission recommended that the Department of Defense remove all combat restrictions on women. Although the total number of jobs closed to women is now relatively low, at 7.3 percent, the commission found that "exclusion from these occupations has a considerable influence on advancement to higher positions" and that eliminating the exclusion is essential "to create a level playing

field for all service members who meet the qualifications." Echoing this sentiment, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.) introduced the Gender Equality in Combat Act in 2012, which seeks the termination of the ground combat exclusion policy. In addition, Command Sergeant Major Jane Baldwin and Colonel Ellen Haring, both of the Army Reserve, filed a lawsuit in May against the secretary of defense and the army's secretary, assistant secretary, and deputy chief of staff claiming that the exclusion policy violates their constitutional rights.

Responding to growing scrutiny, the Pentagon's press secretary, George Little, announced on February 9, 2012, that the Department of Defense would continue to remove restrictions on women's roles. Since then, the military has made a slew of policy revisions and commissioned a series of reviews. In May 2012, for example, the army opened up more than 14,000 combat-related jobs to women. Much of this increase, however, came from officially recognizing the combat-related nature of the jobs conducted by medics and intelligence officers, among others, positions that are already open to women. More substantially, the Marine Corps announced in April 2012 that for the first time, women can enroll and train, but not yet serve, as infantry combat officers. The army has also opened six new combat-related occupational specialties to women. In June 2012, Cicely Verstein became the first woman to serve in one of these newly opened combat support roles when she enlisted as a Bradley Fighting Vehicle systems maintainer. Women such as Verstein can now operate with combat arms units in select positions, yet they are still technically restricted from infantry and special operations roles.

> There are physically fit, tough women who are suitable for combat, and weak, feeble men who are not.

Although the ban still exists on paper, the military is finding various ways to lift it in practice, and so the complete repeal of the policy would not constitute a radical change in operational terms. But it would be an acknowledgment of the contributions that women are already making to U.S. military operations. As Anu Bhagwati, a former Marine captain and now executive director of the Service Women's Action Network, explained in a BBC News interview, "Women are being shot at, are being killed overseas, are being attached to all of these

combat arms units. . . . The [combat exclusion] policy has to catch up to reality." Indeed, all soldiers, female as well as male, have been given extensive combat training since 2003, when the army altered its basic training procedures in response to the growth of irregular warfare in Afghanistan and Iraq. The main obstacle that remains for women who want to serve their country is an outmoded set of biased assumptions about their capabilities and place in society.

WHY WOMEN CAN KEEP UP

THE ARGUMENT that women are not physically fit for combat is perhaps the most publicized and well-researched justification for their exclusion from fighting units. In her 2000 book, *The Kinder, Gentler Military,* the journalist Stephanie Gutmann summarized the position this way: "When butts drop onto seats, and feet grope for foot pedals, and girls of five feet one (not an uncommon height in the ranks) put on great bowl-like Kevlar helmets over a full head of long hair done up in a French braid, there are problems of fit—and those picayune fit problems ripple outward, eventually affecting performance, morale, and readiness."

This argument continues to receive a significant amount of attention in the United States, despite the fact that other militaries across the world have found that with proper training and necessary adaptations, women can complete the same physical tasks as men. In the 1970s, the Canadian military conducted trials that tested women's physical, psychological, and social capacity for combat roles. The results informed the final decision of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to remove Canada's female combat exclusion. After similar tests, Denmark also lifted its combat ban in the late 1980s.

The physical fitness argument, which tends to focus on differences between average male and female bodies, is also undermined by the fact that women who join the military tend to be more fit than the average American. Additional training and conditioning further decrease the gap between female and male service members, and evidence indicates that women usually benefit substantially from fitness-training programs. More to the point, performance is not necessarily determined by gender; it is determined by other attributes and by an individual's determination

to reach physical prowess. To put it bluntly, there are physically fit, tough women who are suitable for combat, and weak, feeble men who are not.

The U.S. armed services would do a better job recognizing this were it not for the fact that, as critics have pointed out, the military's physical standards were created to measure male fitness, not job effectiveness. As Matthew Brown, a U.S. Army colonel and director of the Arizona Army National Guard, found in a U.S. Army War College study, "There is no conclusive evidence that all military members, regardless of occupational specialty, unit assignment, age or gender, should acquire the same level of physical fitness." The U.S. General Accounting Office (now the Government Accountability Office) also admitted in a 1998 report that physical fitness tests are not necessarily a useful gauge of operational effectiveness, explaining, "fitness testing is not aimed at assessing the capability to perform specific missions or military jobs." To be sure, men and women have different types of bodies, but growing research points to the limitations of having a single male-centered standard for fitness and equipment. Recently, for example, the army has moved to design body armor for women rather than force them to continue wearing equipment that restricts their movement and cuts into their legs because it was designed for men. With proper training and equipment, women can contribute to missions just as well as men.

BREAKING UP THE BAND OF BROTHERS

EVEN THOUGH the physical argument does not hold up to scrutiny, many in the military establishment continue to instinctively oppose the idea of women serving in combat roles. In a 1993 *New York Times* article, General Merrill McPeak, former chief of staff of the air force, admitted that he had "a culturally based hang-up." "I can't get over this image of old men ordering young women into combat," he said. "I have a gut-based hang-up there. And it doesn't make a lot of sense in every way. I apologize for it." This belief had earlier been spelled out in the 1992 report of the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces, which was established by George H. W. Bush to review the combat exclusion. The commission

identified several factors related to having women serve in combat roles that could negatively impact troop dynamics, including the "real or perceived inability of women to carry their weight without male assistance, a 'zero privacy' environment on the battlefield, interference with male bonding, cultural values and the desire of men to protect women, inappropriate male/female relationships, and pregnancy—particularly when perceived as a way to escape from combat duty."

While campaigning for the Republican presidential nomination this year, Santorum, the former senator, echoed these concerns, arguing that "instead of focus[ing] on the mission, [male soldiers] may be more concerned about protecting . . . a [female solider] in a vulnerable position." Others fear that men will not be able to restrain themselves sexually if forced to fight and work in close proximity to women. The conservative Independent Women's Forum strongly supports the ban because of the "power of the sex drive when young women and men, under considerable stress, are mixed together in close quarters."

Even as these false assumptions about the inherent nature of men and women persist, many in the military and the general public have changed their minds. In 2010, Admiral Mike Mullen, then chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said, "I know what the law says and I know what it requires, but I'd be hard pressed to say that any woman who serves in Afghanistan today or who's served in Iraq over the last few years did so without facing the same risks as their male counterparts." Similarly, Bhagwati contends that "as proven by ten years of leading troops in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan, there are women that are physically and mentally qualified to succeed . . . and lead infantry platoons." Meanwhile, a 2011 survey conducted by ABC News and *The Washington Post* found that 73 percent of Americans support allowing women in combat.

Despite such shifts in opinion, defenders of the status quo argue that lifting the ban would disrupt male bonding and unit cohesion, which is thought to build soldiers' confidence and thereby increase combat readiness and effectiveness. In 2007, Kingsley Browne, a former U.S. Supreme Court clerk and the author of *Co-ed Combat: The New Evidence That Women Shouldn't Fight the Nation's Wars*, argued that "men fight for many reasons, but probably the most powerful one is the bonding—'male bonding'—with their comrades. . . . Perhaps

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for very fundamental reasons, women do not evoke in men the same feelings of comradeship and 'followership' that men do." These comments betray the widely held fear that women would feminize and therefore reduce the fighting potential of the military. The Israeli military historian Martin van Creveld has echoed this sentiment, writing, "As women enter them, the armed forces in question will become both less willing to fight and less capable of doing so." And as Anita Blair, former assistant secretary of the navy, warned, "The objective for many who advocate a greater female influence in the armed services is not so much to conquer the military as conquer manhood: they aim to make the most quintessentially masculine of our institutions more feminine." By such lights, women fundamentally threaten the unified masculine identity of the military and could never properly fill combat roles because they are inherently incapable of embodying the manly qualities of a soldier.

> The main obstacle for women who want to serve their country is an outmoded set of biased assumptions about their place in society.

This argument is intuitive and plausible. It is also dead wrong. It assumes that a key objective of the military is enhancing masculinity rather than national security and that unit bonding leads to better task performance. In fact, a 1995 study conducted by the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences found that "the relation between cohesiveness and performance is due primarily to the 'commitment to the task' component of cohesiveness, and not the 'interpersonal attraction' or 'group pride' components of cohesiveness." Similarly, a 2006 study in *Armed Forces and Society*, written by the scholars Robert MacCoun, Elizabeth Kier, and Aaron Belkin, concluded that "all of the evidence indicates that military performance depends on whether service members are committed to the same professional goals, not on whether they like one another."

There is significant evidence that not only male bonding but any sort of closeness can actually hinder group performance. In a 1998 study on demographics and leadership, the group management experts Andrew Kakabadse and Nada Kakabadse found that "excessive cohesion may create a harmful insularity from external forces," and they

linked high cohesion to "high conformity, high commitment to prior courses of actions, [and a] lack of openness." In her analysis of gender integration in the military, Erin Solaro, a researcher and journalist who was embedded with combat troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, pointed out that male bonding often depended on the exclusion or denigration of women and concluded that "cohesion is not the same as combat effectiveness, and indeed can undercut it. Supposedly 'cohesive' units can also kill their officers, mutiny, evade combat, and surrender as groups."

The mechanisms for achieving troop cohesion can also be problematic. In addition to denigrating women, illegal activities, including war crimes, have sometimes been used as a means for soldiers to "let off steam" and foster group unity. In sum, there is very little basis on which to link group cohesion to national security.

STRENGTH IN DIVERSITY

Over the last century, the military has been strengthened when attitudes have been challenged and changed. Despite claims in the 1940s that mixed-race units would be ineffective and that white and black service members would not be able to trust one another, for example, integration proceeded without any major hiccups. A 2011 study of the impacts of racial integration on combat effectiveness during the Korean War found that integration "resulted in improvements in cohesion, leadership and command, fighting spirit, personnel resources and sustainment that increased the combat effectiveness." Initial research indicates that mixed-gender units could provide similar benefits.

Leora Rosen, a former senior analyst at the National Institute of Justice, found that when women were accepted into mixed-gender units, the groups' effectiveness actually increased. Similarly, a 1993 RAND Corporation paper summarizing research on sexual orientation and the U.S. military's personnel policy found that diversity "can enhance the quality of group problem-solving and decision-making, and it broadens the group's collective array of skills and knowledge." These conclusions are supported by a 1993 report by the General Accounting Office, which found that "members of gender-integrated units develop brother-sister bonds rather than sexual ones. . . .

Experience has shown that actual integration diminishes prejudice and fosters group cohesiveness more effectively than any other factor." The same report also found that gender homogeneity was not perceived by soldiers to be a requirement for effective unit operations.

It should come as no surprise that elements of the military want uniformity in the ranks. The integration of new groups always ruffles feathers. But the U.S. military has been ahead of the curve in terms of the inclusion of most minority groups. It was the first federal organization to integrate African Americans. And with the repeal of the "don't ask, don't tell" (DADT) policy, the military now has more progressive policies toward gay employees than many other U.S. agencies. In fact, DADT was repealed despite the fact that there are no federal laws preventing employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

In September 2012, one year after the repeal of DADT, a study published by the Palm Center found that the change "has had no overall negative impact on military readiness or its component dimensions, including cohesion, recruitment, retention, assaults, harassment or morale." The research also found that overall, DADT's "repeal has enhanced the military's ability to pursue its mission." Previous claims about the negative impact that gay service members might have on troop cohesion mirror those currently used to support the female combat exclusion.

Unlike the military's treatment of other groups, its current policies toward women are much more conservative than those of other federal and state government bodies. Women who choose military service confront not only restricted career options but also a higher chance of harassment, discrimination, and sexual violence than in almost any other profession. The weak record on addressing these issues gives the impression that the military is an unwelcome place and an unsafe career choice for women. In an interview with National Public Radio in 2011, Sergeant Kayla Williams, who served in Iraq, explicitly linked the combat exclusion and harassment: "I believe that the combat exclusion actually exacerbates gender tensions and problems within the military because the fact that women can't be in combat arms jobs allows us to be portrayed as less than fully soldiers." Fully integrating women could therefore begin to address two major

issues for the U.S. military: enhancing diversity and equality and also weakening the masculine culture that may contribute to harassment.

Unsubstantiated claims about the distracting nature of women, the perils of feminine qualities, and the inherent manliness of war hardly provide a solid foundation on which to construct policy. Presumably, some levels of racism and homophobia also persist within the military, yet it would be absurd, not to mention unconstitutional, for the U.S. government to officially sanction such prejudices. The U.S. military should ensure that it is as effective as possible, but it must not bend to biases, bigotry, and false stereotypes.

Just as when African Americans were fully integrated into the military and DADT was repealed, lifting the combat ban on women would not threaten national security or the cohesiveness of military units; rather, it would bring formal policies in line with current practices and allow the armed forces to overcome their misogynistic past. In a modern military, women should have the right to fight.

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How to Make Almost Anything

The Digital Fabrication Revolution

Neil Gershenfeld

A NEW DIGITAL revolution is coming, this time in fabrication. It draws on the same insights that led to the earlier digitizations of communication and computation, but now what is being programmed is the physical world rather than the virtual one. Digital fabrication will allow individuals to design and produce tangible objects on demand, wherever and whenever they need them. Widespread access to these technologies will challenge traditional models of business, aid, and education.

The roots of the revolution date back to 1952, when researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) wired an early digital computer to a milling machine, creating the first numerically controlled machine tool. By using a computer program instead of a machinist to turn the screws that moved the metal stock, the researchers were able to produce aircraft components with shapes that were more complex than could be made by hand. From that first revolving end mill, all sorts of cutting tools have been mounted on computer-controlled platforms, including jets of water carrying abrasives that can cut through hard materials, lasers that can quickly carve fine features, and slender electrically charged wires that can make long thin cuts.

Today, numerically controlled machines touch almost every commercial product, whether directly (producing everything from laptop cases to jet engines) or indirectly (producing the tools that

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mold and stamp mass-produced goods). And yet all these modern descendants of the first numerically controlled machine tool share its original limitation: they can cut, but they cannot reach internal structures. This means, for example, that the axle of a wheel must be manufactured separately from the bearing it passes through.

In the 1980s, however, computer-controlled fabrication processes that added rather than removed material (called additive manufacturing) came on the market. Thanks to 3-D printing, a bearing and an axle could be built by the same machine at the same time. A range of 3-D printing processes are now available, including thermally fusing plastic filaments, using ultraviolet light to cross-link polymer resins, depositing adhesive droplets to bind a powder, cutting and laminating sheets of paper, and shining a laser beam to fuse metal particles. Businesses already use 3-D printers to model products before producing them, a process referred to as rapid prototyping. Companies also rely on the technology to make objects with complex shapes, such as jewelry and medical implants. Research groups have even used 3-D printers to build structures out of cells with the goal of printing living organs.

Additive manufacturing has been widely hailed as a revolution, featured on the cover of publications from *Wired* to *The Economist*. This is, however, a curious sort of revolution, proclaimed more by its observers than its practitioners. In a well-equipped workshop, a 3-D printer might be used for about a quarter of the jobs, with other machines doing the rest. One reason is that the printers are slow, taking hours or even days to make things. Other computer-controlled tools can produce parts faster, or with finer features, or that are larger, lighter, or stronger. Glowing articles about 3-D printers read like the stories in the 1950s that proclaimed that microwave ovens were the future of cooking. Microwaves are convenient, but they don't replace the rest of the kitchen.

The revolution is not additive versus subtractive manufacturing; it is the ability to turn data into things and things into data. That is what is coming; for some perspective, there is a close analogy with the history of computing. The first step in that development was the arrival of large mainframe computers in the 1950s, which only corporations, governments, and elite institutions could afford. Next

came the development of minicomputers in the 1960s, led by Digital Equipment Corporation's PDP family of computers, which was based on MIT's first transistorized computer, the TX-0. These brought down the cost of a computer from hundreds of thousands of dollars to tens of thousands. That was still too much for an individual but was affordable for research groups, university departments, and smaller companies. The people who used these devices developed the applications for just about everything one does now on a computer: sending e-mail, writing in a word processor, playing video games, listening to music. After minicomputers came hobbyist computers. The best known of these, the MITS Altair 8800, was sold in 1975 for about $1,000 assembled or about $400 in kit form. Its capabilities were rudimentary, but it changed the lives of a generation of computing pioneers, who could now own a machine individually. Finally, computing truly turned personal with the appearance of the IBM personal computer in 1981. It was relatively compact, easy to use, useful, and affordable.

The aim is to not only produce the parts for a drone, for example, but build a complete vehicle that can fly right out of the printer.

Just as with the old mainframes, only institutions can afford the modern versions of the early bulky and expensive computer-controlled milling devices. In the 1980s, first-generation rapid prototyping systems from companies such as 3D Systems, Stratasys, Epilog Laser, and Universal brought the price of computer-controlled manufacturing systems down from hundreds of thousands of dollars to tens of thousands, making them attractive to research groups. The next-generation digital fabrication products on the market now, such as the RepRap, the MakerBot, the Ultimaker, the PopFab, and the MTM Snap, sell for thousands of dollars assembled or hundreds of dollars as parts. Unlike the digital fabrication tools that came before them, these tools have plans that are typically freely shared, so that those who own the tools (like those who owned the hobbyist computers) can not only use them but also make more of them and modify them. Integrated personal digital fabricators comparable to the personal computer do not yet exist, but they will.

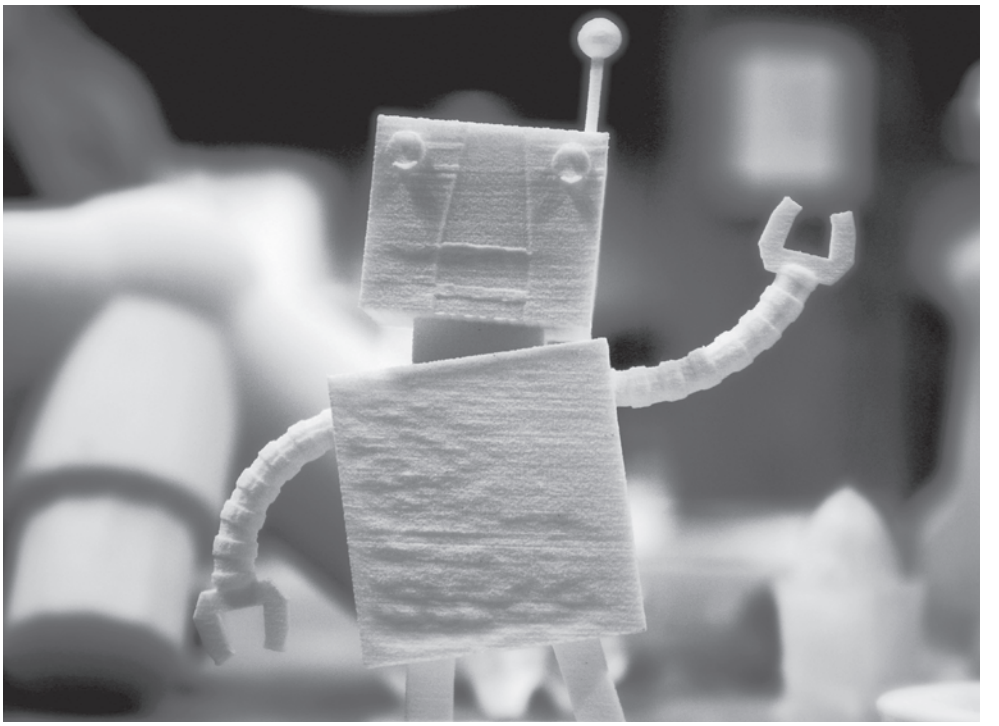
Neil Gershenfeld

Personal fabrication has been around for years as a science-fiction staple. When the crew of the TV series *Star Trek: The Next Generation* was confronted by a particularly challenging plot development, they could use the onboard replicator to make whatever they needed. Scientists at a number of labs (including mine) are now working on the real thing, developing processes that can place individual atoms and molecules into whatever structure they want. Unlike 3-D printers today, these will be able to build complete functional systems at once, with no need for parts to be assembled. The aim is to not only produce the parts for a drone, for example, but build a complete vehicle that can fly right out of the printer. This goal is still years away, but it is not necessary to wait: most of the computer functions one uses today were invented in the minicomputer era, long before they would flourish in the era of personal computing. Similarly, although today's digital manufacturing machines are still in their infancy, they can already be used to make (almost) anything, anywhere. That changes everything.

THINK GLOBALLY, FABRICATE LOCALLY

I FIRST APPRECIATED the parallel between personal computing and personal fabrication when I taught a class called "How to Make (almost) Anything" at MIT's Center for Bits and Atoms, which I direct. CBA, which opened in 2001 with funding from the National Science Foundation, was developed to study the boundary between computer science and physical science. It runs a facility that is equipped to make and measure things that are as small as atoms or as large as buildings.

We designed the class to teach a small group of research students how to use CBA's tools but were overwhelmed by the demand from students who just wanted to make things. Each student later completed a semester-long project to integrate the skills they had learned. One made an alarm clock that the groggy owner would have to wrestle with to prove that he or she was awake. Another made a dress fitted with sensors and motorized spine-like structures that could defend the wearer's personal space. The students were answering a question that I had not asked: What is digital fabrication good for? As it turns out, the "killer app" in digital fabrication, as



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I come in one piece: a printed robot at the Oslo School of Architecture and Design

in computing, is personalization, producing products for a market of one person.

Inspired by the success of that first class, in 2003, CBA began an outreach project with support from the National Science Foundation. Rather than just describe our work, we thought it would be more interesting to provide the tools. We assembled a kit of about $50,000 worth of equipment (including a computer-controlled laser, a 3-D printer, and large and small computer-controlled milling machines) and about $20,000 worth of materials (including components for molding and casting parts and producing electronics). All the tools were connected by custom software. These became known as "fab labs" (for "fabrication labs" or "fabulous labs"). Their cost is comparable to that of a minicomputer, and we have found that they are used in the same way: to develop new uses and new users for the machines.

Starting in December of 2003, a CBA team led by Sherry Lassiter, a colleague of mine, set up the first fab lab at the South End Technology Center, in inner-city Boston. SETC is run by Mel King, an activist who has pioneered the introduction of new technologies to

urban communities, from video production to Internet access. For him, digital fabrication machines were a natural next step. For all the differences between the MIT campus and the South End, the responses at both places were equally enthusiastic. A group of girls from the area used the tools in the lab to put on a high-tech street-corner craft sale, simultaneously having fun, expressing themselves, learning technical skills, and earning income. Some of the home-schooled children in the neighborhood who have used the fab lab for hands-on training have since gone on to careers in technology.

The SETC fab lab was all we had planned for the outreach project. But thanks to interest from a Ghanaian community around SETC, in 2004, CBA, with National Science Foundation support and help from a local team, set up a second fab lab in the town of Sekondi-Takoradi, on Ghana's coast. Since then, fab labs have been installed everywhere from South Africa to Norway, from downtown Detroit to rural India. In the past few years, the total number has doubled about every 18 months, with over 100 in operation today and that many more being planned. These labs form part of a larger "maker movement" of high-tech do-it-yourselfers, who are democratizing access to the modern means to make things.

Local demand has pulled fab labs worldwide. Although there is a wide range of sites and funding models, all the labs share the same core capabilities. That allows projects to be shared and people to travel among the labs. Providing Internet access has been a goal of many fab labs. From the Boston lab, a project was started to make antennas, radios, and terminals for wireless networks. The design was refined at a fab lab in Norway, was tested at one in South Africa, was deployed from one in Afghanistan, and is now running on a self-sustaining commercial basis in Kenya. None of these sites had the critical mass of knowledge to design and produce the networks on its own. But by sharing design files and producing the components locally, they could all do so together. The ability to send data across the world and then locally produce products on demand has revolutionary implications for industry.

The first Industrial Revolution can be traced back to 1761, when the Bridgewater Canal opened in Manchester, England. Commissioned by the Duke of Bridgewater to bring coal from his mines in Worsley

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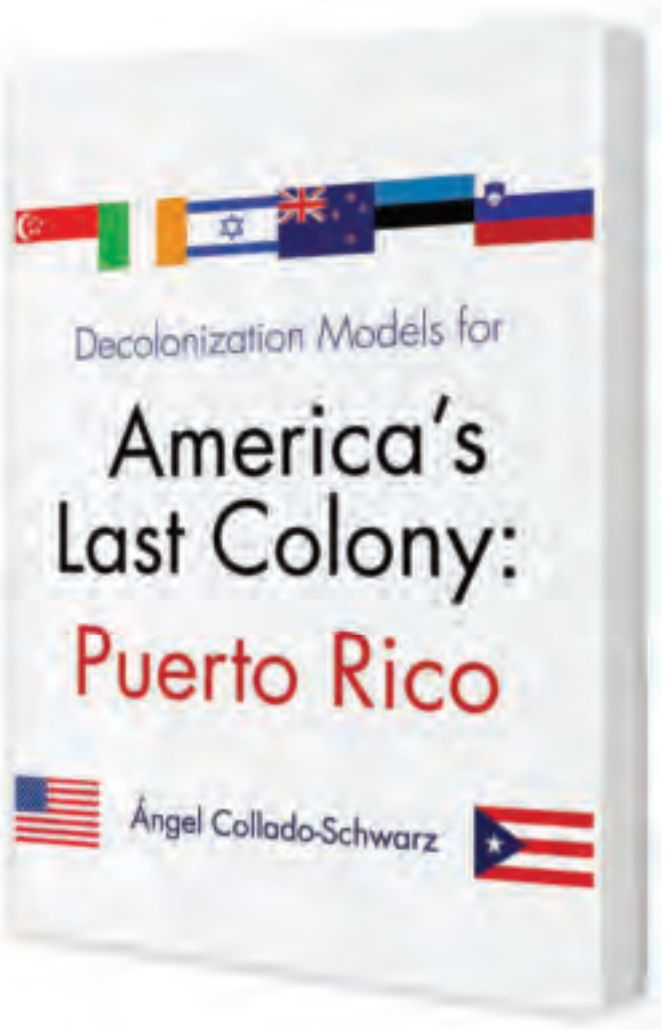
Decolonization Models for America's Last Colony: Puerto Rico



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to Manchester and to ship products made with that coal out to the world, it was the first canal that did not follow an existing waterway. Thanks to the new canal, Manchester boomed. In 1783, the town had one cotton mill; in 1853, it had 108. But the boom was followed by a bust. The canal was rendered obsolete by railroads, then trucks, and finally containerized shipping. Today, industrial production is a race to the bottom, with manufacturers moving to the lowest-cost locations to feed global supply chains.

Now, Manchester has an innovative fab lab that is taking part in a new industrial revolution. A design created there can be sent electronically anywhere in the world for on-demand production, which effectively eliminates the cost of shipping. And unlike the old mills, the means of production can be owned by anyone.

Why might one want to own a digital fabrication machine? Personal fabrication tools have been considered toys, because the incremental cost of mass production will always be lower than for one-off goods. A similar charge was leveled against personal computers. Ken Olsen, founder and CEO of the minicomputer-maker Digital Equipment Corporation, famously said in 1977 that "there is no reason for any individual to have a computer in his home." His company is now defunct. You most likely own a personal computer. It isn't there for inventory and payroll; it is for doing what makes you yourself: listening to music, talking to friends, shopping. Likewise, the goal of personal fabrication is not to make what you can buy in stores but to make what you cannot buy. Consider shopping at IKEA. The furniture giant divines global demand for furniture and then produces and ships items to its big-box stores. For just thousands of dollars, individuals can already purchase the kit for a large-format computer-controlled milling machine that can make all the parts in an IKEA flat-pack box. If having the machine saved just ten IKEA purchases, its expense could be recouped. Even better, each item produced by the machine would be customized to fit the customer's preference. And rather than employing people in remote factories, making furniture this way is a local affair.

> The digitization of material is not a new idea. It is four billion years old, going back to the evolutionary age of the ribosome.

This last observation inspired the Fab City project, which is led by Barcelona's chief architect, Vicente Guallart. Barcelona, like the rest of Spain, has a youth unemployment rate of over 50 percent. An entire generation there has few prospects for getting jobs and leaving home. Rather than purchasing products produced far away, the city, with Guallart, is deploying fab labs in every district as part of the civic infrastructure. The goal is for the city to be globally connected for knowledge but self-sufficient for what it consumes.

The digital fabrication tools available today are not in their final form. But rather than wait, programs like Barcelona's are building the capacity to use them as they are being developed.

BITS AND ATOMS

In common usage, the term "digital fabrication" refers to processes that use the computer-controlled tools that are the descendants of MIT's 1952 numerically controlled mill. But the "digital" part of those tools resides in the controlling computer; the materials themselves are analog. A deeper meaning of "digital fabrication" is manufacturing processes in which the materials themselves are digital. A number of labs (including mine) are developing digital materials for the future of fabrication.

The distinction is not merely semantic. Telephone calls used to degrade with distance because they were analog: any errors from noise in the system would accumulate. Then, in 1937, the mathematician Claude Shannon wrote what was arguably the best-ever master's thesis, at MIT. In it, he proved that on-off switches could compute any logical function. He applied the idea to telephony in 1938, while working at Bell Labs. He showed that by converting a call to a code of ones and zeros, a message could be sent reliably even in a noisy and imperfect system. The key difference is error correction: if a one becomes a 0.9 or a 1.1, the system can still distinguish it from a zero.

At MIT, Shannon's research had been motivated by the difficulty of working with a giant mechanical analog computer. It used rotating wheels and disks, and its answers got worse the longer it ran. Researchers, including John von Neumann, Jack Cowan, and Samuel Winograd, showed that digitizing data could also apply to computing:

a digital computer that represents information as ones and zeros can be reliable, even if its parts are not. The digitization of data is what made it possible to carry what would once have been called a supercomputer in the smart phone in one's pocket.

These same ideas are now being applied to materials. To understand the difference from the processes used today, compare the performance of a child assembling LEGO pieces to that of a 3-D printer. First, because the LEGO pieces must be aligned to snap together, their ultimate positioning is more accurate than the motor skills of a child would usually allow. By contrast, the 3-D printing process accumulates errors (as anyone who has checked on a 3-D print that has been building for a few hours only to find that it has failed because of imperfect adhesion in the bottom layers can attest). Second, the LEGO pieces themselves define their spacing, allowing a structure to grow to any size. A 3-D printer is limited by the size of the system that positions the print head. Third, LEGO pieces are available in a range of different materials, whereas 3-D printers have a limited ability to use dissimilar materials, because everything must pass through the same printing process. Fourth, a LEGO construction that is no longer needed can be disassembled and the parts reused; when parts from a 3-D printer are no longer needed, they are thrown out. These are exactly the differences between an analog system (the continuous deposition of the 3-D printer) and a digital one (the LEGO assembly).

The digitization of material is not a new idea. It is four billion years old, going back to the evolutionary age of the ribosome, the protein that makes proteins. Humans are full of molecular machinery, from the motors that move our muscles to the sensors in our eyes. The ribosome builds all that machinery out of a microscopic version of LEGO pieces, amino acids, of which there are 22 different kinds. The sequence for assembling the amino acids is stored in DNA and is sent to the ribosome in another protein called messenger RNA. The code does not just describe the protein to be manufactured; it becomes the new protein.

Labs like mine are now developing 3-D assemblers (rather than printers) that can build structures in the same way as the ribosome. The assemblers will be able to both add and remove parts from a discrete set. One of the assemblers we are developing works with

components that are a bit bigger than amino acids, cluster of atoms about ten nanometers long (an amino acid is around one nanometer long). These can have properties that amino acids cannot, such as being good electrical conductors or magnets. The goal is to use the nanoassembler to build nanostructures, such as 3-D integrated circuits. Another assembler we are developing uses parts on the scale of microns to millimeters. We would like this machine to make the electronic circuit boards that the 3-D integrated circuits go on. Yet another assembler we are developing uses parts on the scale of centimeters, to make larger structures, such as aircraft components and even whole aircraft that will be lighter, stronger, and more capable than today's planes—think a jumbo jet that can flap its wings.

A key difference between existing 3-D printers and these assemblers is that the assemblers will be able to create complete functional systems in a single process. They will be able to integrate fixed and moving mechanical structures, sensors and actuators, and electronics. Even more important is what the assemblers don't create: trash. Trash is a concept that applies only to materials that don't contain enough information to be reusable. All the matter on the forest floor is recycled again and again. Likewise, a product assembled from digital materials need not be thrown out when it becomes obsolete. It can simply be disassembled and the parts reconstructed into something new.

The most interesting thing that an assembler can assemble is itself. For now, they are being made out of the same kinds of components as are used in rapid prototyping machines. Eventually, however, the goal is for them to be able to make all their own parts. The motivation is practical. The biggest challenge to building new fab labs around the world has not been generating interest, or teaching people how to use them, or even cost; it has been the logistics. Bureaucracy, incompetent or corrupt border controls, and the inability of supply chains to meet demand have hampered our efforts to ship the machines around the world. When we are ready to ship assemblers, it will be much easier to mail digital material components in bulk and then e-mail the design codes to a fab lab so that one assembler can make another.

Assemblers' being self-replicating is also essential for their scaling. Ribosomes are slow, adding a few amino acids per second. But there

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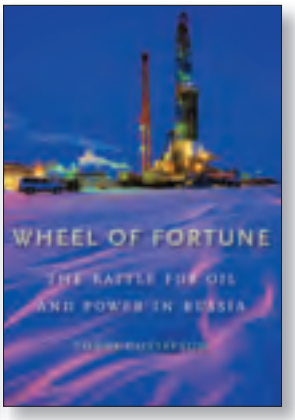

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are also very many of them, tens of thousands in each of the trillions of cells in the human body, and they can make more of themselves when needed. Likewise, to match the speed of the *Star Trek* replicator, many assemblers must be able to work in parallel.

GRAY GOO

ARE THERE dangers to this sort of technology? In 1986, the engineer Eric Drexler, whose doctoral thesis at MIT was the first in molecular nanotechnology, wrote about what he called "gray goo," a doomsday scenario in which a self-reproducing system multiplies out of control, spreads over the earth, and consumes all its resources. In 2000, Bill Joy, a computing pioneer, wrote in *Wired* magazine about the threat of extremists building self-reproducing weapons of mass destruction. He concluded that there are some areas of research that humans should not pursue. In 2003, a worried Prince Charles asked the Royal Society, the United Kingdom's fellowship of eminent scientists, to assess the risks of nanotechnology and self-replicating systems.

Although alarming, Drexler's scenario does not apply to the self-reproducing assemblers that are now under development: these require an external source of power and the input of nonnatural materials. Although biological warfare is a serious concern, it is not a new one; there has been an arms race in biology going on since the dawn of evolution.

A more immediate threat is that digital fabrication could be used to produce weapons of individual destruction. An amateur gunsmith has already used a 3-D printer to make the lower receiver of a semi-automatic rifle, the AR-15. This heavily regulated part holds the bullets and carries the gun's serial number. A German hacker made 3-D copies of tightly controlled police handcuff keys. Two of my own students, Will Langford and Matt Keeter, made master keys, without access to the originals, for luggage padlocks approved by the U.S. Transportation Security Administration. They x-rayed the locks with a CT scanner in our lab, used the data to build a 3-D computer model of the locks, worked out what the master key was, and then produced working keys with three different processes: numerically controlled milling, 3-D printing, and molding and casting.

These kinds of anecdotes have led to calls to regulate 3-D printers. When I have briefed rooms of intelligence analysts or military leaders on digital fabrication, some of them have invariably concluded that the technology must be restricted. Some have suggested modeling the controls after the ones placed on color laser printers. When that type of printer first appeared, it was used to produce counterfeit currency. Although the fake bills were easily detectable, in the 1990s the U.S. Secret Service convinced laser printer manufacturers to agree to code each device so that it would print tiny yellow dots on every page it printed. The dots are invisible to the naked eye but encode the time, date, and serial number of the printer that printed them. In 2005, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a group that defends digital rights, decoded and publicized the system. This led to a public outcry over printers invading peoples' privacy, an ongoing practice that was established without public input or apparent checks.

Digital fabrication could be used to produce weapons of individual destruction.

Justified or not, the same approach would not work with 3-D printers. There are only a few manufacturers that make the print engines used in laser printers. So an agreement among them enforced the policy across the industry. There is no corresponding part for 3-D printers. The parts that cannot yet be made by the machine builders themselves, such as computer chips and stepper motors, are commodity items: they are mass-produced and used for many applications, with no central point of control. The parts that are unique to 3-D printing, such as filament feeders and extrusion heads, are not difficult to make. Machines that make machines cannot be regulated in the same way that machines made by a few manufacturers can be.

Even if 3-D printers could be controlled, hurting people is already a well-met market demand. Cheap weapons can be found anywhere in the world. CBA's experience running fab labs in conflict zones has been that they are used as an alternative to fighting. And although established elites do not see the technology as a threat, its presence can challenge their authority. For example, the fab lab in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, has provided wireless Internet access to a

community that can now, for the first time, learn about the rest of the world and extend its own network.

A final concern about digital fabrication relates to the theft of intellectual property. If products are transmitted as designs and produced on demand, what is to prevent those designs from being replicated without permission? That is the dilemma the music and software industries have faced. Their immediate response—introducing technology to restrict copying files—failed. That is because the technology was easily circumvented by those who wanted to cheat and was irritating for everyone else. The solution was to develop app stores that made is easier to buy and sell software and music legally. Files of digital fabrication designs can be sold in the same way, catering to specialized interests that would not support mass manufacturing.

Patent protections on digital fabrication designs can work only if there is some barrier to entry to using the intellectual property and if infringement can be identified. That applies to the products made in expensive integrated circuit foundries, but not to those made in affordable fab labs. Anyone with access to the tools can replicate a design anywhere; it is not feasible to litigate against the whole world. Instead of trying to restrict access, flourishing software businesses have sprung up that freely share their source codes and are compensated for the services they provide. The spread of digital fabrication tools is now leading to a corresponding practice for open-source hardware.

PLANNING INNOVATION

COMMUNITIES SHOULD not fear or ignore digital fabrication. Better ways to build things can help build better communities. A fab lab in Detroit, for example, which is run by the entrepreneur Blair Evans, offers programs for at-risk youth as a social service. It empowers them to design and build things based on their own ideas.

It is possible to tap into the benefits of digital fabrication in several ways. One is top down. In 2005, South Africa launched a national network of fab labs to encourage innovation through its National Advanced Manufacturing Technology Strategy. In the United

States, Representative Bill Foster (D-Ill.) proposed legislation, the National Fab Lab Network Act of 2010, to create a national lab linking local fab labs. The existing national laboratory system houses billion-dollar facilities but struggles to directly impact the communities around them. Foster's bill proposes a system that would instead bring the labs to the communities.

Another approach is bottom up. Many of the existing fab lab sites, such as the one in Detroit, began as informal organizations to address unmet local needs. These have joined regional programs. These regional programs, such as the United States Fab Lab Network and FabLab.nl, in Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands, take on tasks that are too big for an individual lab, such as supporting the launch of new ones. The regional programs, in turn, are linking together through the international Fab Foundation, which will provide support for global challenges, such as sourcing specialized materials around the world.

To keep up with what people are learning in the labs, the fab lab network has launched the Fab Academy. Children working in remote fab labs have progressed so far beyond any local educational opportunities that they would have to travel far away to an advanced institution to continue their studies. To prevent such brain drains, the Fab Academy has linked local labs together into a global campus. Along with access to tools, students who go to these labs are surrounded by peers to learn from and have local mentors to guide them. They participate in interactive global video lectures and share projects and instructional materials online.

The traditional model of advanced education assumes that faculty, books, and labs are scarce and can be accessed by only a few thousand people at a time. In computing terms, MIT can be thought of as a mainframe: students travel there for processing. Recently, there has been an interest in distance learning as an alternative, to be able to handle more students. This approach, however, is like time-sharing on a mainframe, with the distant students like terminals connected to a campus. The Fab Academy is more akin to the Internet, connected locally and managed globally. The combination of digital communications and digital fabrication effectively allows the campus to come to the students, who can share projects that are locally produced on demand.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts that in 2020, the United States will have about 9.2 million jobs in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. According to data compiled by the National Science Board, the advisory group of the National Science Foundation, college degrees in these fields have not kept pace with college enrollment. And women and minorities remain significantly underrepresented in these fields. Digital fabrication offers a new response to this need, starting at the beginning of the pipeline. Children can come into any of the fab labs and apply the tools to their interests. The Fab Academy seeks to balance the decentralized enthusiasm of the do-it-yourself maker movement and the mentorship that comes from doing it together.

After all, the real strength of a fab lab is not technical; it is social. The innovative people that drive a knowledge economy share a common trait: by definition, they are not good at following rules. To be able to invent, people need to question assumptions. They need to study and work in environments where it is safe to do that. Advanced educational and research institutions have room for only a few thousand of those people each. By bringing welcoming environments to innovators wherever they are, this digital revolution will make it possible to harness a larger fraction of the planet's brainpower.

Digital fabrication consists of much more than 3-D printing. It is an evolving suite of capabilities to turn data into things and things into data. Many years of research remain to complete this vision, but the revolution is already well under way. The collective challenge is to answer the central question it poses: How will we live, learn, work, and play when anyone can make anything, anywhere?

Strategy in a Time of Austerity

Why the Pentagon Should Focus on Assuring Access

Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr.

Over the next decade, the U.S. military will need to undertake the most dramatic shift in its strategy since the introduction of nuclear weapons more than 60 years ago. Just as defense budgets are declining, the price of projecting and sustaining military power is increasing and the range of interests requiring protection is expanding. This means that tough strategic choices will finally have to be made, not just talked about. As the British physicist Ernest Rutherford once declared to his colleagues, "We haven't got the money, so we've got to think."

A new strategic framework will be needed, one focused less on repelling traditional cross-border invasions, effecting regime change, and conducting large-scale stability operations and more on preserving access to key regions and the global commons, which are essential to U.S. security and prosperity. The bad news is that this will mean reducing the priority of certain objectives and accepting greater risk in some realms. But the good news is that with a shift in focus, truly critical U.S. interests can continue to be protected at a sustainable cost.

Declining Resources

After the Cold War, Washington enjoyed a "unipolar moment," drawing on its overwhelming advantage in resources and technology to achieve an unprecedented level of global military dominance. Two decades on, however, that moment is fading. The U.S. economic engine

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is sputtering, with unpleasant implications for a Defense Department that has grown accustomed to steady budget growth.

From 1999 to 2011, annual U.S. defense spending increased from $360 billion to $537 billion in constant dollars, not including an additional cumulative $1.3 trillion spent on operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Obama administration and Congress have already agreed to pare back planned further increases over the next decade by a total of nearly $487 billion. In January 2013, the budgetary process known as "sequestration" is set to trigger another $472 billion in total reductions over the same period. Congress may avoid sequestration by finding other ways to lower the federal deficit, but even if it does, additional major cuts in defense spending are likely to come eventually. And if history is any guide, most of the $200 billion in "efficiency" savings over the next five years that the Pentagon is currently counting on will fail to materialize.

This means that serious belt-tightening is coming—a process that will be made even more difficult thanks to increasing manpower costs and the decline of the country's European allies. Since its inception in the 1970s, the United States' all-volunteer military has been a source of strength, generating a highly professional force. But the recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have revealed the volunteer force's Achilles' heel: in order to attract large numbers of qualified personnel willing to serve in dangerous and unpleasant wartime conditions, the Defense Department has had to raise salaries and benefits substantially. Even adjusted for inflation, total military compensation has increased by nearly 50 percent over the past decade—an unsustainable rate of growth.

Fielding a volunteer force also means keeping casualties low or wars short. To protect its troops from the enemy's use of cheap roadside bombs in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Pentagon spent over $40 billion on thousands of new heavily armored vehicles, along with over $20 billion to better detect the bombs.

In the past, the United States might have looked to its wealthy and technically advanced allies, such as France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, to step up and fill the gap. Yet while all these countries have long and impressive martial traditions, their current militaries and defense industries are faint shadows of their former

selves. Each spends on defense less than half of what the United States does as a percentage of their GDPs, and in real dollars, they spend only one-quarter as much combined. They can help preserve a stable international system, but they act largely as free riders on the United States for their security. The United States' Pacific allies, such as Japan and Australia, might be willing to shoulder a greater burden in their region, but they have yet to augment their defenses enough to make a significant difference.

GROWING CHALLENGES

As the United States and its allies reduce their military spending, the world is experiencing growing turbulence. For decades, the United States has sought to prevent hostile powers from dominating critical regions, such as western Europe, the western Pacific, and the Persian Gulf, while preserving unfettered access to the global commons (the seas, space, and now cyberspace). Following the Cold War, the threat to Europe's security declined dramatically, but the same cannot be said about the other two regions or the commons, since rivals such as China and Iran are working to shift regional military balances in their favor.

Perhaps the most striking development is the progressive loss of the U.S. military's near monopoly on precision-guided munitions, or "smart bombs." China, in particular, is moving to exploit the effectiveness of precision-guided munitions to achieve its strategic goals. The People's Liberation Army (PLA) is incorporating precision guidance into its ballistic and cruise missiles and strike aircraft to enhance their ability to strike fixed targets with high accuracy over long distances. This has profound implications for the U.S. military's traditional way of projecting power, which relies heavily on deploying and supplying forces through major ports, logistics depots, and air bases. The PLA is also looking beyond the ability to conduct precision strikes against fixed targets and is developing missile systems designed to strike mobile targets, such as the U.S. Navy's aircraft carriers. And the PLA is aggressively pursuing both antisatellite and cyberwarfare capabilities to target the U.S. military's information and communications systems. Together, these "anti-access/

U.S. NAVY / ROBYN GERSTENSLAGER

Keeping up: training near Fort Eustis, Virginia, July 2008

area-denial" (A2/AD) capabilities will significantly increase the risks to U.S. forces operating in the western Pacific.

With a similar goal of regional hegemony but fewer resources, Iran is pursuing more modest A2/AD capabilities, including antiship cruise missiles, sophisticated antiship mines, and submarines. Iran is looking to combine these with large numbers of small boats capable of conducting "swarm attacks" on U.S. warships and with growing numbers of ballistic missiles that can range far beyond the Gulf. Tehran appears to have several objectives in mind, including transforming the Persian Gulf into a "no-go zone" for the U.S. Navy and, by extension, eroding the confidence of the United States' regional partners in Washington's reliability. Iran might also eventually provide precision-guided weaponry to clients and proxies such as Hezbollah and other local militant groups, helping them present a more lethal threat to U.S. expeditionary forces. Finally, Iran appears intent on acquiring nuclear weapons.

The secure access to the commons that the international community has come to take for granted, meanwhile, is being increasingly

challenged. U.S. control of the open oceans is not in question, but within this decade, the proliferation of submarines, long-range antiship cruise missiles, and "smart" antiship mines could make transiting maritime chokepoints, such as the Strait of Hormuz, a hazardous proposition. Space-based satellites—essential components of both the global economy and U.S. military effectiveness—are becoming increasingly vulnerable to the PLA's antisatellite lasers and missiles. And the critical infrastructure behind everything from the United States' power grid and energy pipelines to its financial systems and e-commerce is either poorly defended against cyberattacks or not defended at all.

Because the resources available to the U.S. military will be increasingly limited, the objectives must be, too.

In the past, freedom of the seas has mostly meant freedom of traffic over them. In recent decades, however, a vast undersea economic infrastructure has emerged, located primarily on the world's continental shelves. It provides a substantial portion of the world's oil and natural gas, and it hosts a web of cables linking much of the Defense Department's Global Information Grid. Capital assets on the U.S. offshore seabed alone are estimated to exceed $1 trillion. And major new oil and gas finds in the eastern Mediterranean, along with prospective discoveries in the South China Sea, guarantee that undersea infrastructure will grow further.

Yet undersea capital assets are effectively undefended, since, as with the Internet, their developers assumed a benign geopolitical environment. Until recently, this did not pose a serious problem, as these assets were generally inaccessible. Now, however, technological advances are rendering critical undersea infrastructure increasingly vulnerable to potential enemies. Once the possession of only the most advanced navies, autonomous underwater vehicles, or robotic submersibles, are now commercially available and capable of carrying explosives and other contraband cargo. Latin American drug runners employ submersible and semisubmersible craft to move their freight, and it appears that other nonstate entities will be increasingly able to operate in the undersea domain.

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REDUCING THE GAP

At its core, strategy should provide a guide for using available resources to achieve realistic objectives. Because the resources available to the U.S. military will be increasingly limited, the objectives must be, too—lest the result be a hollow strategy that neither worries enemies nor assures friends. This means setting priorities among competing security objectives. The strategy of assured access summarized here would do this by reordering goals, selectively taking on risk, and exploiting the United States' strengths and its rivals' weaknesses.

Since the end of the Cold War, Washington has placed a high priority on maintaining the ability to wage two major wars simultaneously in Northeast Asia and the Persian Gulf. The focus has been on defending key allies and partners from traditional cross-border ground invasions (such as North Korea's attack on South Korea in 1950 and Iraq's attack on Kuwait in 1990) and defeating the aggressors, if need be, through counterinvasions aimed at regime change.

But today's threats are different. Neither China nor Iran is emphasizing an updated version of Soviet tank armies or Iraq's Republican Guard. The current and future challenge to stability in the western Pacific and the Persian Gulf is not a cross-border invasion but the spread of A2/AD capabilities, which will make it increasingly difficult for the United States to operate freely in those areas.

In recent years, the U.S. military has undertaken a number of operations aimed at regime change, most notably in Afghanistan and Iraq. These have successfully deposed hostile governments but have required protracted large-scale stability operations afterward that have been both costly and indecisive. The American public appears to have little stomach for any more such operations, except perhaps in response to a major attack against vital U.S. interests. Occupying hostile territory, moreover, is likely to become even more difficult over time thanks to the diffusion of what the Pentagon calls "G-RAMM"—guided rockets, artillery, mortars, and missiles. And if the prospect of conducting a regime-change operation against a country the size of Iran is daunting, in the case of China, it is pure moonshine.

Fortunately, the United States has no need to set such ambitious objectives, since what it really wants is not conquest but access. The

challenges that China and Iran pose for U.S. security lie not in the threat of traditional cross-border invasions but in efforts to establish spheres of influence in, and ultimately to control access to, critically important regions. What the Pentagon should set its sights on, therefore, is not optimizing U.S. forces to be able to produce regime changes through counterinvasions but a return to the more modest objective of forward defense: deterring regional aggression or coercion and protecting the global commons from major disruption.

With this shift in focus, A2/AD capabilities—which favor defense—become not problems for the United States and its allies but tools to be used by them, since the onus of power projection would fall not on Washington but on its opponents. Toward this end, the United States should work with its allies and partners in the western Pacific and the Persian Gulf to create local air- and sea-denial networks that would make aggression difficult, costly, and unattractive. South Korea and Taiwan could be important contributors to such regional defense networks, but Japan will be the linchpin in any U.S. strategy to maintain stability and access in the western Pacific. Tokyo should increase its investment in A2/AD capabilities, such as submarines, antisubmarine-warfare aircraft, antiship cruise missiles, defensive mining, air and missile defenses, and military base hardening and dispersion, reducing both the likelihood of any Chinese or North Korean attack and the burden on U.S. forces responsible for the defense of Northeast Asia. And similar investments by the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council would help minimize any regional threat posed by Iran.

Efforts such as these would enable U.S. forces in both regions to emphasize their unique strengths, such as long-range strike systems that can operate beyond the range of rival A2/AD systems and nuclear-powered attack submarines that can operate effectively within enemy A2/AD barriers. Increasing the number of forward hardened air bases, meanwhile, would allow U.S. strike fighters to be dispersed in forward positions, reducing the risk of their being destroyed in preemptive missile attacks and thereby enhancing crisis stability.

Such a strategy would play to several of the United States' competitive advantages, among them its broad network of regional alliances and partnerships and its lead in many advanced military systems. It would also exploit regional geography. A U.S. defense architecture in the

western Pacific based along the so-called first island chain (from the Kuril Islands, through Japan and the Ryukyu Islands, to Taiwan and the Philippines) would protect U.S. allies and partners there while hemming in hostile naval forces during a conflict. And Iran has no choice but to export its oil and gas through either the Strait of Hormuz or pipelines traversing foreign territory. The Gulf Cooperation Council states, in contrast, could expand their capacity for exporting energy resources via the Red and Arabian seas, providing them with options in the event of a blockage of the Strait of Hormuz and leaving Iran in a position of comparative economic vulnerability. Should Iran attempt to route its exports through ports along the Arabian Sea, the U.S. Navy would be well positioned to interdict its shipping.

This shift in focus would hardly mean granting opponents territorial sanctuary or immunity from attack. The United States has the ability to conduct long-range penetrating strikes against its foes—by planes, missiles, and submarines—and it needs to do whatever is required to maintain that. U.S. special operations forces have shown the ability to operate effectively in hostile territory, especially when supported by strike aircraft and drones. The U.S. military also appears to maintain an impressive arsenal of cyberweapons that can be employed with potentially devastating effects against an enemy's critical infrastructure and armed forces. And if necessary, U.S. naval forces can pressure enemy homelands through blockades.

Deterrence through denial is designed to convince a would-be aggressor that he cannot achieve his objective, so there is no point in trying. Deterrence through punishment is designed to persuade him that even though he may be able to achieve his objective, he will suffer so much as a result that his anticipated costs will outweigh his gains. Deterrence by denial should be possible in both the western Pacific and the Persian Gulf, because the coming environment will likely privilege defense over offense in conventional military operations. When it comes to protecting the commons, however, the vast array of soft potential targets—undersea infrastructure, satellites, computer networks—gives the advantage to offense, and so here the United States and its allies will need to rely more on deterrence by punishment.

This may be complicated by the difficulty of figuring out who is responsible for any attack—a prerequisite for punishment. When it

comes to undersea, space, and cyberspace attacks, therefore, the Pentagon should make it an urgent priority to enhance its post-attack forensics and other forms of intelligence aimed at identifying attackers. The quicker and better it can do this, the more able it will be to reestablish deterrence by punishment as a central element of assuring access to the commons. Even accurate attribution may not be sufficient to deter attacks should nonstate groups achieve a greater ability to conduct cyberwarfare and to operate under the seas, as they may not fear retaliation or may have few assets against which to retaliate. So the Pentagon will also need to plan on developing ways of limiting the damage from such attacks and figuring out how to rapidly reconstitute damaged or destroyed assets.

Despite the desire of many powers in the developed world to reduce their reliance on nuclear weapons or even eliminate them entirely, such weapons retain their popularity. Russia's military doctrine has increased the country's reliance on nuclear weapons to help offset its weak conventional forces. China retains a strong nuclear force. Pakistan is building additional nuclear reactors to produce fissile material for its expanding nuclear arsenal to offset India's advantage in conventional forces. Iran is driving to a nuclear capability, which could spur an additional proliferation cascade in the Middle East. In light of all this, the Defense Department needs to undertake a comprehensive nuclear posture review that addresses multiple plausible contingencies of nuclear use, coming up with practical policies for how such uses might be prevented or, failing that, how a nuclear conflict might be terminated on acceptable terms once begun.

No strategy is without its risks, and this one relies significantly on the actions and investments of regional allies and partners—never a sure thing. It is encouraging, however, that many U.S. partners in the Asia-Pacific region have expressed growing concerns over China's military buildup and increasingly assertive territorial claims. These concerns must now be translated into investments in military capabilities. The United States' Arab partners in the Gulf, in contrast, are already making substantial investments in their defenses, but they need to focus their efforts on countering Iran's attempts to assert regional hegemony. The strategy also rests in part on the anticipation that countries sharing common interests with the United

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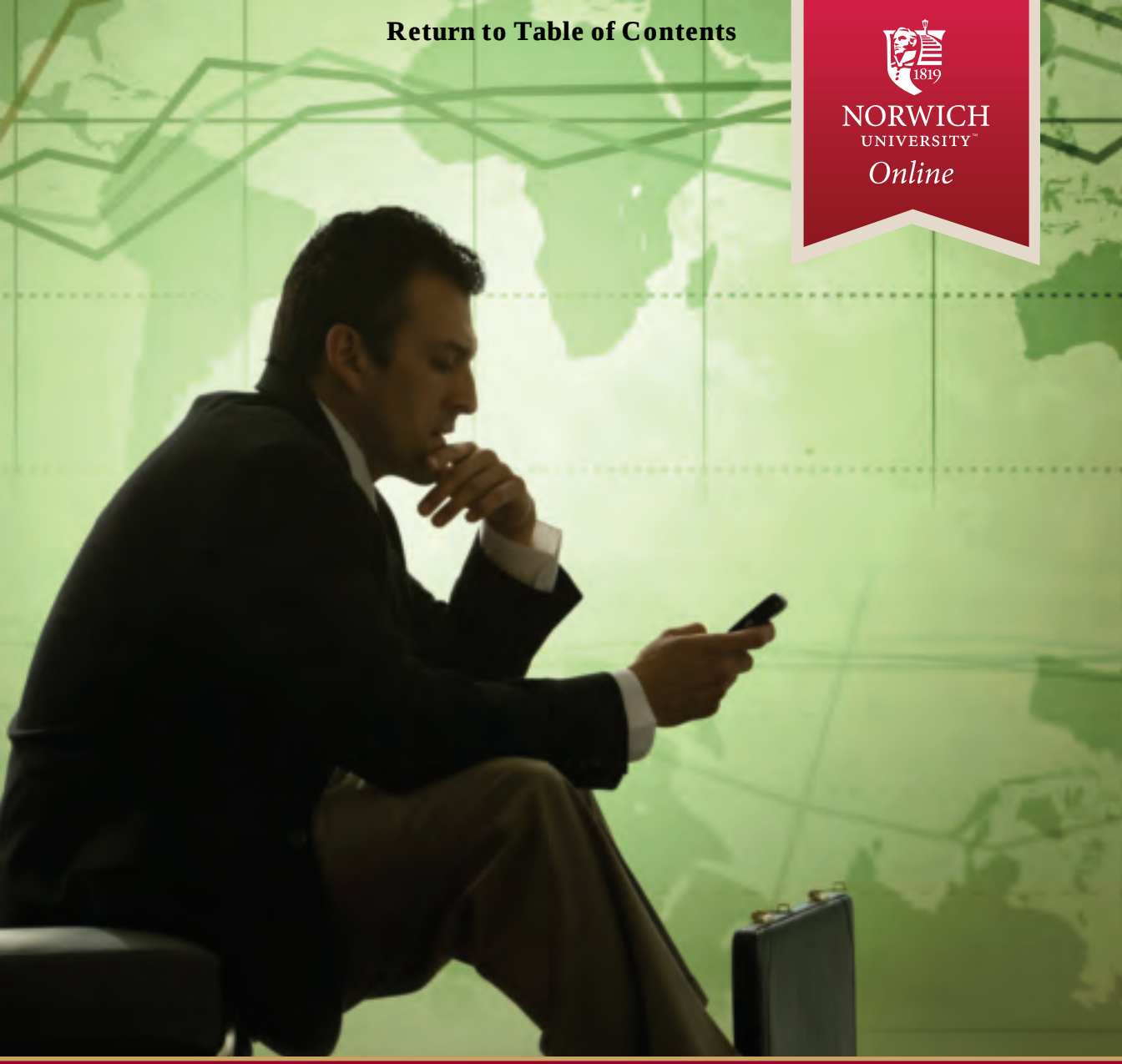

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States, such as India and Indonesia, will welcome efforts to preserve the stability of, and free access to, the greater Indo-Pacific region.

A strategy of assured access reflects a sense of what the U.S. military can realistically achieve. Should deterrence fail, the objective of any military action would be to restore the status quo ante, rather than pursue broader Wilsonian ideals and a resolution of the supposed root causes of the problem. The goal would be to keep a conflict limited, even at the cost of forgoing definitive or optimum outcomes. This would be similar to the Iraq strategy of President George H. W. Bush, not that of President George W. Bush, the Korea strategy of President Harry Truman, not that of General Douglas MacArthur. It might forgo a hypothetical best option—but letting such a best outcome be the enemy of an acceptable one would be a mistake of the first order, especially when the best is a dangerous illusion.

HARD CHOICES

Strategy is about setting priorities, and not everything can be a top priority. So if an assured-access strategy gives priority to maintaining access to critical regions and the global commons, what parts of the existing U.S. approach does it not include? What objectives does it leave out, and what greater risks does it accept in order to narrow the gap between strategic objectives and resource limitations?

Major defense economies, it suggests, could come from deeper reductions in U.S. ground forces. The U.S. Army and the Marine Corps, which were expanded to meet the demands of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, are already being reduced. But the currently planned drawdown will still leave them larger than they were on 9/11, when U.S. strategy called for them to wage two major regional wars, including regime-change operations. So there is room to cut further.

The United States could scale back, for example, the ground force contributions it plans on making in any major conflict on the Korean Peninsula. The threat from North Korea has changed radically since the early 1950s, from a traditional ground invasion to a massed artillery barrage including missiles and weapons of mass destruction. South Korea has twice the population of North Korea and boasts one of the world's largest economies. Its ground forces are both large and competent. The

greatest comparative advantages the U.S. military has relative to its South Korean counterpart are in air and sea power. The time has come, accordingly, to acknowledge that Seoul is fully capable of assuming primary responsibility for its own ground defense, and it should do so.

When it comes to stability operations, the Pentagon should commit seriously to its already de facto strategy of using an "indirect approach" to preserving order in the developing world outside the western Pacific and the Persian Gulf. The U.S. military's comparative advantage in counterterrorist and stability operations lies in the quality of its manpower, not its quantity. U.S. forces are simply too expensive to be committed in large numbers to the defense of peripheral interests. This means avoiding direct U.S. interventions and instead emphasizing training, advising, equipping, and supporting allies and partners confronting internal security threats. In ungoverned areas, it means relying on such "light footprint" alternatives as robotic scout and strike aircraft, which special operations forces can use to form hunt-and-kill teams to suppress hostile groups.

In meeting U.S. security commitments to Europe, moreover, the objective should be to maintain NATO while minimizing costs. To that end, Washington should place greater emphasis on nuclear guarantees to meet its Article 5 security commitment and reevaluate its plans to deploy elaborate missile defenses with little or no monetary contribution from the European allies being defended.

As for its defense policy, the Pentagon can narrow the means-ends gap and save money by increasing its emphasis on recapitalizing equipment rather than modernizing it—that is, by stressing in-kind replacement as opposed to fielding entirely new generations of weapons systems with their high development costs. Such systems should be fielded only when the technical risks associated with doing so are minimal and when senior leaders have high confidence that the new systems will provide a dramatic and enduring boost in military effectiveness.

Where possible, the United States should use its resources in ways that impose disproportionate costs on its rivals. An important source of the United States' competitive advantage in this area is its long and distinguished history of "black" programs, which have produced the atomic bomb, the U-2 and SR-71 spy planes, stealth aircraft, and now, apparently, advanced cyberweapons such as the Stuxnet virus. The U.S. defense

industry's ability to produce such military capabilities on a sustained basis increases the uncertainty under which rivals must plan, compelling them to divert resources to cover a range of possible new U.S. capabilities.

After years of delay, moreover, the Defense Department is developing a family of long-range strike systems, including a new bomber. These systems will not be cheap, but it still makes sense to invest in them, because the costs to prospective enemies of countering them will be even higher and because the systems will sustain the U.S. military's ability to penetrate any enemy's defenses and threaten key targets at will. Enemies will thus have to either leave critical assets undefended or develop and field sophisticated (and expensive) defenses along their entire borders.

One key resource currently being squandered by the Pentagon is time. The quicker the United States can develop and field military equipment, the smaller the size of the standing forces it will need to maintain and the greater the uncertainty that its foes will face. Once a leader in its ability to field new systems rapidly, the Defense Department now typically requires a decade or more to do so; reducing that time frame significantly should be a major priority.

For much of the last 20 years, a relatively stable international order and generous budgets have enabled the United States to avoid making difficult choices about defense and strategy. Decisions were often dominated by the domestic politics of defense policy, parochial bureaucratic interests, and sheer inertia rather than rigorous planning. When conflict came, too often strategy ended up meaning throwing ever-greater resources at a problem and hoping that the sheer weight of the effort would enable the United States to prevail. This approach did not succeed in Afghanistan or Iraq, and it is even less attractive now that the challenges to U.S. security are growing while the Pentagon's budgets are diminishing.

Critical choices need to be made regarding the size and structure of the U.S. armed forces, their doctrine and equipment, and what are the most promising areas of future investment. The time is long past for these choices to be made consciously and intelligently, informed by a strategy based on rigorous thinking about the nature of the challenges at hand and the alternatives for addressing them that will best preserve national security.

The Problem With the Pivot

Obama's New Asia Policy Is Unnecessary and Counterproductive

Robert S. Ross

Ever since the Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping opened up his country's economy in the late 1970s, China has managed to grow in power, wealth, and military might while still maintaining cooperative and friendly relations with most of the world. Until a few years ago, that is, when Beijing seemed to change tack, behaving in a way that alienated its neighbors and aroused suspicion abroad. In December 2009, for example, Beijing's resistance to compromise at the UN Climate Change Conference angered European countries and the United States. Then, following the January 2010 sale of U.S. arms to Taiwan, the Chinese government suspended a senior U.S.-Chinese security dialogue for the first time and announced unprecedented sanctions against U.S. companies with ties to Taiwan (although it is not clear that the sanctions caused meaningful damage). In July of that year, Beijing angrily protested plans for U.S.–South Korean naval exercises in the Yellow Sea, and in September, it excoriated Japan for detaining the captain of a Chinese fishing boat that had rammed a Japanese coast guard ship in disputed waters. To cap off this series of unsettling episodes, Beijing voiced excessive hostility toward democratic countries and imposed economic sanctions on Norway after the Nobel Prize committee awarded the Chinese democracy activist Liu Xiaobo the Peace Prize

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in October. In a few short months, China had managed to undo much of what it had gained through years of talk about its "peaceful rise."

At the time, many analysts interpreted China's new belligerence as a sign of the country's growing confidence. Writing in *The Washington Post*, John Pomfret noted that Beijing was evincing "a new triumphalist

attitude." China was on the rise, the thinking went, and its newfound power had convinced its leaders that they could shape events in Asia as never before. And so in 2010, the Obama administration initiated what it called a "pivot" to Asia, a shift in strategy aimed at bolstering the United States' defense ties with countries throughout the region and expanding the U.S. naval presence there. The diplomatic element of the strategy was on display in 2011, when Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta reassured U.S. allies, many of which harbor concerns about China's rise, that "the United States is going to remain a presence in the Pacific for a long time," and the following year, when he promised that the U.S. military would bring "enhanced capabilities to this vital region." Worried that a newly assertive China was becoming a destabilizing force, the White House moved to counter any perceptions of its own weakness by strengthening the U.S. presence in the region.

Beijing's tough diplomacy stemmed not from confidence in its might but from a deep sense of insecurity.

Unfortunately, however, this shift was based on a fundamental misreading of China's leadership. Beijing's tough diplomacy stemmed not from confidence in its might—China's leaders have long understood that their country's military remains significantly inferior to that of the United States—but from a deep sense of insecurity born of several nerve-racking years of financial crisis and social unrest. Faced with these challenges, and no longer able to count on easy support based on the country's economic growth, China's leaders moved to sustain their popular legitimacy by appeasing an increasingly nationalist public with symbolic gestures of force.

Consider China's behavior in such a light, and the risks of the pivot become obvious. The new U.S. policy unnecessarily compounds Beijing's insecurities and will only feed China's aggressiveness, undermine regional stability, and decrease the possibility of cooperation between Beijing and Washington. Instead of inflating estimates of Chinese power and abandoning its long-standing policy of diplomatic engagement, the United States should recognize China's underlying weaknesses and its own enduring strengths. The right China policy would assuage, not exploit, Beijing's anxieties, while protecting U.S. interests in the region.

THE PAPER TIGER ROARS

THE DECISION to pursue the pivot was based on the premise that a newly emboldened China was challenging U.S. interests and undermining regional stability simply because it could—that is, because its growing military power made aggressive diplomacy easier and more attractive than in the past. In his March 2010 testimony to the U.S. Congress, Admiral Robert Willard, then head of the U.S. Pacific Command, asserted that China's recent military advances had been "pretty dramatic." The truth, however, is that the United States has greatly overestimated China's military capabilities. Although the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has made great strides since 1979, when it was embarrassed by its poor performance in a brief war with Vietnam, its power remains limited. Over the last ten years, the PLA has not deployed any new ships or aircraft that significantly enhanced its ability to challenge U.S. maritime superiority. China's main tool to counter the U.S. Navy and deter an American intervention in Asian conflicts remains a fleet of diesel submarines that has been in service since the mid-1990s.

For all the talk of China's naval modernization, the PLA has only just begun constructing a next-generation guided-missile destroyer, the quantity and quality of which will pale in comparison to those of the United States' Aegis-class destroyer fleet. It was only in August 2011 that Beijing launched its first aircraft carrier—the U.S. military has 11—and it was an old and relatively small ship purchased from the Russians. China is developing antiship ballistic missiles that could target U.S. aircraft carriers, but it has not yet mastered the technology to deploy these weapons. And according to the Pentagon's own 2011 report on the Chinese military, less than 30 percent of the PLA's naval surface forces, air forces, and air defense forces and only 55 percent of its submarine fleet could be considered modern. In short, the PLA is still unable to challenge U.S. dominance at sea or upend the balance of power in the region.

Over the last few years, Beijing has had more to worry about than its military shortcomings. In late 2008, when Chinese leaders recognized that their country was not immune to the financial tremors rocking the globe, Beijing panicked at the prospect of a spike in domestic

unemployment and hastily funded a massive stimulus package of four trillion yuan (about $570 billion). But this only made things worse, breeding short-term instability and long-term structural imbalances in the economy. The result was that in 2009–10, China experienced the worst economic turmoil since the 1960s, following Mao Zedong's Great Leap Forward.

Between 2009 and 2010, inflation increased more than tenfold, and in February 2010, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao acknowledged that the worsening inflation resulting from the stimulus could "undermine social stability." By 2009, housing prices in major cities had surpassed the average middle-class monthly income by 20–30 percent, far exceeding the World Bank's suggested ratio. Meanwhile, throughout early 2010, in an attempt to constrain lending, China's central bank repeatedly increased the amount of capital banks were required to hold in reserve. Nonetheless, inflation continued to increase. According to a June 2010 survey, nearly 60 percent of Chinese reported that prices were "too high to be acceptable." Since the previous year, vegetable prices had gone up by approximately 25 percent, garlic prices had increased tenfold, and the price of tea was 20 percent higher.

The United States has unnecessarily challenged Beijing by boosting its military presence on the East Asian mainland.

As high inflation took its toll, unemployment and inequality rose: the urban unemployment rate in 2009 was the highest since 1980. The government especially feared that unemployed college graduates would destabilize Chinese cities. Over seven million graduates were without work in 2009, so the government invested 42 billion yuan (roughly $6 billion) to employ them in rural areas. And as the economy deteriorated, even the state-run *People's Daily* ran an article acknowledging the situation; a May 2010 headline read: "Income Divide Reaches Dangerous Point." The article cited World Bank statistics that ranked Chinese inequality "among the highest in the world." Reflecting the leadership's concern that mass discontent could boil over into antigovernment hostility, the newspaper warned that inequality could "brew strong negative feelings against the affluent" and that

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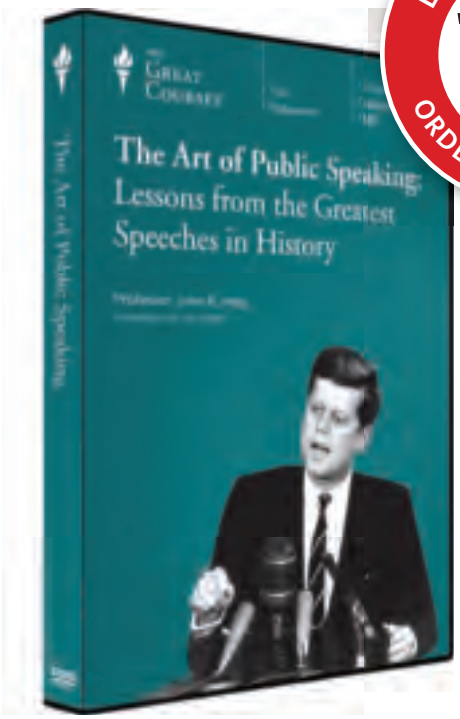

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"the alarm bell is ringing." It continued: "Beijing must not, and cannot afford to ignore it."

This unemployment and inequality produced just the kind of unrest Beijing feared it would. According to Chinese government figures, the number of "mass incidents"—defined as illegal protests of five or more people that disrupt public order—increased from 120,000 in 2008 to over 180,000 in 2010. In a 2009 riot in Shishou, in Hubei Province, 70,000 people confronted police officers in what the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, a government-affiliated think tank, considered to be "the most serious street riot" since 1949. The social scientists at the academy argued that the increase in violent crime and civil disorder in 2009 reflected greater rural unemployment and the resulting growth of an idle, marginalized population. And in 2010, Guo Binsheng, a senior editor at the official Xinhua News Agency, warned that China had entered a period of "outstanding social conflict" and that "the task of stability . . . will be very arduous." Faced with this growing unrest and needing to stave off a real crisis of legitimacy, Beijing had no choice but to appease a growing cadre of hard-line nationalists who wanted to project a tough image of China to the world.

RED DAWN

The Chinese Communist Party has long promoted nationalism to sustain its legitimacy, but during the recent decades of rapid growth, the Chinese public focused more on economic advancement than on politics. When the global financial crisis hit in 2008, however, Beijing could no longer simply rely on economic success. Meanwhile, nationalism was on the rise. Even though the party's top policymakers understood the country's deficiencies, many Chinese nonetheless believed that the global financial crisis signaled the culmination of China's rise to great-power status. In 2008 and 2009, as the United States fell into a recession, China's economy grew by ten percent. And the Chinese leadership's touting of the PLA's successes, including its antipiracy missions, space program, and tests of advanced military aircraft, suggested to the public that China was catching up to the United States and should thus adopt a more assertive foreign policy.

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Following the January 2010 announcement of U.S. arms sales to Taiwan, Chinese opinion leaders and increasingly vocal Internet users argued for sanctions against the U.S. defense companies that had participated in the deal. Rear Admiral Yang Yi, former director of the Institute for Strategic Studies at the PLA's National Defense University, called for China to "give a lesson to the U.S. government that harming others will harm yourself." Similarly, Major General Luo Yuan, deputy secretary-general of the China Society of Military Science, insisted that it was time to "settle accounts" with the United States. Some Chinese Internet users on the Web sites of the *People's Daily* and QQ, a popular instant-messaging program, quickly followed their lead, demanding that China break diplomatic ties with the United States and begin exporting weapons to Iran, North Korea, and Pakistan.

Then, in September 2010, the dispute between Beijing and Tokyo over the detained fishing-boat captain became the most searched item on the Internet in China—a sign of just how enraged the public was over the issue. Online portals were overwhelmed with demands that Japan immediately and unconditionally release the captain. And in the official media, Feng Zhaokui, a senior Japan specialist at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, argued that "it is no longer the era in which China can be bullied at will." Despite the state's attempts to quell them, calls for protests circulated on the Internet, sparking demonstrations in front of not only the Japanese embassy but also the Chinese Foreign Ministry building.

As nationalist sentiment rose and economic and political problems roiled the country, Chinese leaders, concerned for the party's public standing and fearful of popular unrest, accommodated the nationalists with tough diplomacy and rhetoric. The result was Beijing's uncompromising posture of 2009–10, which alienated not only China's neighbors but also countries around the world. This new diplomacy stoked alarm throughout East Asia about China's rise, which in turn led the United States to resolve to sustain the balance of power in the region.

THE END OF ENGAGEMENT

Some aspects of President Barack Obama's Asia strategy have built on the policies of previous administrations. Washington has

been devoting more resources to the region since at least 1997, when it first moved a submarine from Europe to Guam. The Clinton and George W. Bush administrations then deployed every type of major naval and air weapons system to Guam and Japan, cooperated with Singapore to build an aircraft carrier facility at the Changi Naval Base, and strengthened U.S. defense cooperation with Japan and the Philippines. The Bush administration assigned an additional aircraft carrier to the Pacific theater, and the Pentagon announced in 2005 that it would deploy 60 percent of U.S. submarines to Asia. Throughout the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, military funding for the Pacific theater remained at high levels.

These policies constituted an effective response to the rise of China. But following China's uncompromising stances of 2009 and 2010, Washington faced a credibility problem: its East Asian allies questioned whether the United States, mired in its worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, could contend with a seemingly more confident and capable China. Largely to assuage these fears, the United States set out to prove that it could maintain the balance of power in the region.

The Obama administration's pivot has included a doubling down on the efforts of previous administrations. Washington expanded its joint naval exercises with Japan to prepare for the defense of disputed islands, reached new agreements to sell arms to the Phillipines, and, most recently, in April 2012, agreed to send U.S. marines to Australia. The administration also restored defense cooperation with Indonesia and New Zealand. These measured policies have reassured U.S. allies of Washington's commitment to the region's stability.

But the administration has also reversed Washington's long-standing policy of engagement with Beijing, turning instead to costly initiatives whose force is disproportionate to the threat from China. Regarding territorial disputes over the Spratly Islands, in the South China Sea, past administrations were able to deter regional powers from resorting to aggression by making clear the United States' interest in maintaining freedom of navigation. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, however, directly inserted the United States into these legally complex disputes. In July 2010 in Hanoi, after extensive discussions with all the claimants to the islands except China, Clinton declared

U.S. support for the negotiating positions of the Philippines and Vietnam. What makes this decision puzzling is that these islands have little economic value (apart from fishing) and no mineral resources, and they are of minor strategic importance since they are too small to support military activities.

The United States has also unnecessarily challenged Beijing by boosting its military presence on the East Asian mainland. Recognizing that South Korean forces required less U.S. assistance to manage the threat from North Korea, the Bush administration withdrew 40 percent of U.S. troops from South Korea, ended the deployment of U.S. troops between Seoul and the demilitarized zone that divides North and South Korea, and reduced the scale and frequency of U.S.–South Korean military exercises. The Obama administration has reversed this trend. Over the last three years, the United States has carried out its largest joint military exercises with South Korea since the Korean War and increased the U.S. troop presence in South Korea. Washington and Seoul have also reached multiple new defense agreements, and earlier this year, the Pentagon announced plans to upgrade U.S. military capabilities on the Korean Peninsula, despite the fact that South Korea's military capabilities have vastly improved relative to the those of the increasingly dysfunctional North Korean regime.

At the same time, the United States has reinforced its presence in Indochina. Since the early 1990s, successive U.S. administrations had rebuffed Vietnam's desire for more substantial defense ties. Washington understood that if it wanted cooperative relations with Beijing, it would need to acknowledge that China had a far greater strategic stake in the region than the United States. But in 2010, Clinton and then Secretary of Defense Robert Gates both visited Hanoi (Clinton went twice). The secretary of state called for a U.S.-Vietnamese strategic partnership, and in late 2010, for the first time since the end of the Vietnam War, the United States carried out joint naval training with Vietnam. Since then, the U.S. Navy has held annual exercises with the Vietnamese navy, and in 2011, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding on defense cooperation. Meanwhile, the United States has also strengthened its cooperation with Cambodia, which in 2010 joined the U.S.-led Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training, a series of annual bilateral

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naval exercises in the region. That year, Clinton explicitly warned Phnom Penh not to become "too dependent" on China.

Finally, the Obama administration has promoted a maritime coalition in the South China Sea. To complement U.S. ties with the Philippines and Vietnam, Japan signed strategic partnerships with the two countries, expanding their defense cooperation and military exchanges. This year, the Australian, Japanese, and South Korean militaries for the first time participated in the annual U.S.-Philippine military exercise called Balikatan (meaning "shoulder to shoulder").

ASSUAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

Even if the United States had limited its response to China's nationalist diplomacy to improving defense ties with its maritime allies in the region, China's leaders would not have been pleased. But those steps were necessary for U.S. security, occurred far from China's borders, and built on the policies of previous administrations. When Washington got directly involved in China's sovereignty disputes and increased its presence on China's land borders, however, Beijing predictably saw this departure from past U.S. policy as gratuitous, expansionist, and threatening. As might be expected from a great power faced with a deteriorating strategic environment, China has pushed back against the pivot with concrete policies rather than the merely aggressive rhetoric it employed in the past.

One result has been that China has all but given up its effort to use its leverage over North Korea to get it to abandon its nuclear program. Since 2011, Beijing has substantially increased its food aid to Pyongyang, imported more of North Korea's mineral resources, and made significant investments in North Korean mining, infrastructure, and manufacturing. China has also withdrawn its support for the six-party talks on North Korea's nuclear program, forcing Washington to pursue bilateral negotiations with Pyongyang. Meanwhile, North Korea continues to develop its nuclear weapons capability.

The PLA has also put pressure on those of China's neighbors that have boosted their defense cooperation with the United States. In the spring of 2011, tensions between Beijing and Hanoi escalated as

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Chinese patrol ships harassed Vietnamese seismic survey boats in disputed waters, and several Chinese military officers advocated the use of force against the Vietnamese navy. Similarly, China's maritime confrontation earlier this year with the Philippines over the contested Scarborough Shoal suggests that Beijing will push back against countries that rely on the United States to support them in sovereignty disputes. China sent combat-ready patrols to defend its claim to the shoal and, after the Philippines withdrew its ships, established a permanent presence there. Also this year, Chinese national oil companies announced unprecedented plans to drill for oil in disputed waters—the other claimants have been active in these waters for years—and the PLA formed a new military garrison charged with defending the country's territorial claims in the South China Sea. Since then, China has continued to actively strengthen its presence throughout the disputed waters and islands.

The right China policy would assuage, not exploit, Beijing's anxieties, while protecting U.S. interests in the region.

As all these events suggest, the Obama administration's pivot has not contributed to stability in Asia. Quite the opposite: it has made the region more tense and conflict-prone. Military aircraft and naval ships now crowd the region's skies and waters. And the United States risks getting involved in hostilities over strategically irrelevant and economically marginal islands.

The pivot will be further complicated by an environment of growing nationalism, not only in China but also in Japan, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Consider what happened in September, when anti-Chinese sentiment in Japan pressured Tokyo to purchase an island chain that both it and Beijing claim. (The territory is known in China as the Diaoyu Islands and in Japan as the Senkaku Islands.) After Tokyo's governor, Shintaro Ishihara, who is an outspoken anti-China activist, expressed interest in buying the islands—a move that would certainly have provoked Beijing—the Japanese government purchased them itself, instead of simply blocking the sale. Like the Spratly Islands, these islands are of little strategic or economic value. Nonetheless, Japan's move challenged China's claim to the islands and provoked

anti-Japanese demonstrations throughout China, sparking vandalism of Japanese businesses and government property there. This nationalist outcry led Beijing to escalate tensions with Japan. At least 14 Chinese government surveillance ships accompanied hundreds of Chinese fishing boats to the islands, where they entered Japanese-claimed territorial seas.

Meanwhile, China has challenged U.S. interests beyond East Asia, forsaking the cooperation that the two countries had managed to sustain in the years leading up to the pivot. Whereas between 2006 and 2010, China voted for five UN Security Council resolutions imposing sanctions on Iran, in 2012 Beijing threatened to veto sanctions on Iranian oil exports. After the United States, European countries, and Japan independently agreed to sanction Iranian oil exports in January 2012, Beijing reached new agreements with Tehran to purchase Iranian oil. What is more, Beijing has blocked Washington's attempts to halt the bloodshed in Syria, stymying its initiatives at the UN and backing Moscow's support for the Syrian leadership.

Washington's increased activity on China's periphery has led Beijing to conclude that the United States has abandoned strategic engagement, the cornerstone of U.S. policy toward China since the end of the Cold War. In contrast to previous administrations, the Obama administration has dismissed China's legitimate security interests in its border regions, including even those that are not vital to U.S. security. By threatening China and challenging its sovereignty claims over symbolic territories, Washington has encouraged Chinese leaders to believe that only by adopting belligerent policies will a rising China be able to guarantee its security. Herein lies the great irony of the pivot: a strategy that was meant to check a rising China has sparked its combativeness and damaged its faith in cooperation.

The pivot has already damaged U.S. security interests, and the cost will only grow. If Washington continues down its current path, Chinese resistance to U.S. policies will inevitably increase, preventing bilateral cooperation on crucial issues from trade to global economic stability. The outbreak of hostilities in the region will become a real possibility, as China pushes back against the United States' growing

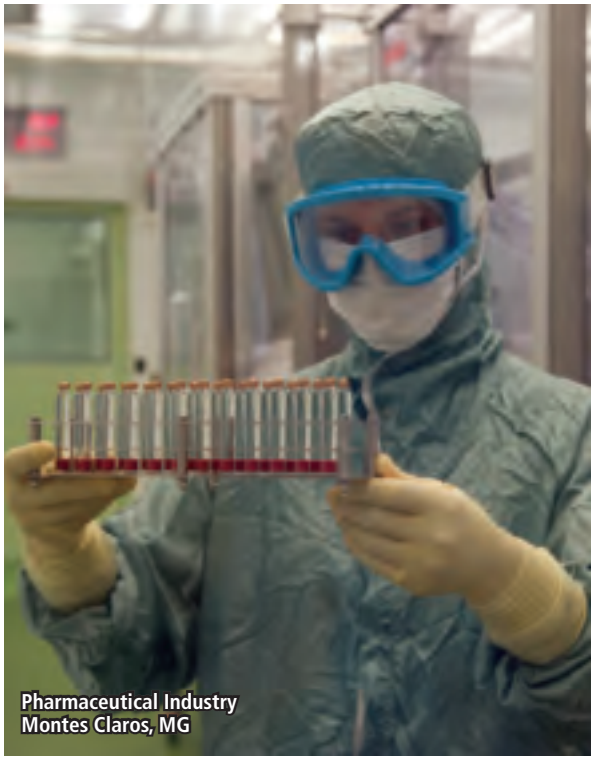
presence on its borders and nationalist tension rises between China and U.S. security partners over disputed but inconsequential islands.

This need not be the case. The United States could respond to China's tough diplomacy with policies that would both sustain the regional order and minimize the chances of a U.S.-Chinese conflict. Over the next several years, Washington should reshape its Asia policy to restore the consensus of previous administrations: that increasing the United States' military presence on the East Asian mainland is not vital for U.S. security and that the United States should avoid entanglement in complex sovereignty claims in the region. Because the U.S. Navy will continue to dominate Asia's seas, the United States can reassure its allies of its resolve to counterbalance China while still quietly disengaging from maritime disputes and reducing its presence on China's land borders. As China rises, a policy of restraint, rather than alarmism, will best serve U.S. national security.

Outlook for growth draws businesses to Brazil

By Cláudia Costa

Brazil's largest automaker
Betim, Minas Gerais



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The consolidation of democracy in Brazil, combined with the stout development the country has seen over recent years, continues to attract global players to the Brazilian market. With no heavy government interference as in China or religious conflicts as in India, Brazil remains the Western leader of the BRIC block -- also composed of Russia, India, and China -- and a safe haven for companies seeking legally reliable and politically stable markets.

A long road, however, lies ahead. Even with growth rates already far below January expectations, the Ministry of Finance reduced in September its growth forecast for the Brazilian economy from 3percent to 2percent, while market financial analysts estimate gross gomestic product (GDP) growth has slipped from 1.64percent to 1.62percent.

The government's efforts to get Brazil back on track, meanwhile, have been remarkable. This September, President Dilma Rousseff announced new electric utility rules, providing a relief of up to 28 percent for manufacturing industry electric bills. The purpose is to boost domestic competitiveness in the face of heavy competition from foreign markets. Vandick Silveira, president at IBMEC, a leading private educational institution in Brazil, says, "Companies compete with other companies, regardless of countries, so there is a need for a free flow of goods, people and technologies for sustainable growth to happen in Brazil, without the former model based on subsidized public companies."

Glauco Arbix, president at FINEP, a public research funding institute, says that there is in Brazil today a select group of approximately 1,500 companies that compete in the world market without fear, focusing on innovation and technology: "In spite of the heavy tax burden and infrastructure issues, these companies compete in the international market undaunted, without fear of innovation or new technologies, differentiating Brazil from other emerging economies and putting us alongside China," he explains.

Ms Rousseff also announced the long-awaited 11th Round of Oil and Gas Exploration Concessions, scheduled for May 2013. For Magda Chambriard, director of the National Petroleum, Natural Gas and Biofuels Agency (ANP), the moment is favorable for Brazil. "We are making an appearance in the international market as a country with a large oil potential, on account of the recently found 'pre-salt' reserves. New players are constantly searching Brazil for new opportunities," she observes.

Oswaldo Borges,
President of CODEMIG

Alfredo Setubal,
Vice-president of Itaú Unibanco Holding S.A

New perspectives are also expected in the logistic infrastructure after a new government concession package was announced allotting investments of R$133 billion (US$1 = R$ 2.03) in roads and railway concessions, of which R$42 billion will pave 7,500 kilometers of highways and R$91 billion will lay down no fewer than 10,000 km of railways. Alfredo Setubal, vice president of Itaú-Unibanco, Brazil's largest private bank, believes these changes in the government's attitude are important for the country's growth. "The Brazilian state does not have the capacity to invest alone. These reforms clear the path for the private sector to contribute to infrastructure investments," remarks the executive.

MINAS GERAIS COUNTS ON SOLID PUBLIC AND PRIVATE MACHINE TO ATTRACT INVESTMENTS

Today the third largest economy in the country, the state of Minas Gerais enjoyed a growth of 2.1 percent over the third quarter of 2012. The state's Department for Economic Development brings together important institutions that include the Minas Gerais Integrated Development Institute (INDI) and the Minas Gerais Economic Development Company (CODEMIG). Aside from the public infrastructure, investors also rely on support from the business association, the Minas Gerais State Industry Federation (FIEMG), which promotes sustainable and competitive development of industries statewide.

Jose Frederico Alves,
Presidente of INDI

Murilo Ferreira,
CEO of Vale S.A

The Swiss Center for Electronics and Microtechnology in Minas Gerais (CSEM Brazil)

The economic development department's task is to create favorable conditions to attract new investments to the state, which they does by adopting new public management concepts and working seamlessly with public companies and maintaining a permanent dialogue with the private sector. Recently, Minas was appointed the first Brazilian state to open a unit to manage the implementation of public-private partnerships (PPPs), the country's new development investment model. "In Minas, the PPP program is considered essential to the promotion of sustainable development, based on the principles of good governance and the best use of public resources," says Dorothea Werneck, secretary of economic development, points out.

Yacoff Sarkovas, CEO at Elderman-Significa Brazil (colligated to Edelman, a world-leading PR agency), believes that most of the national privatization program brought benefits through investments, leveraging development. "Several companies, including Petrobras, became far healthier, much better companies, competitive and developing world-class excellence."

One pillar of economic development -- technological innovation -- gained local strength with state government support in the creation of the new Swiss Center for Electronics and Microtechnology (CSEM Brazil), created to turn cutting-edge technology into innovative products, services, and companies. There are also sixty-six bioscience businesses in Minas, over one-third of the country's total and one of the largest concentrations of biotech companies in Latin America.

INDI, the Minas Gerais Integrated Development Institute, is the investor's gateway into Minas Gerais. It provides counseling, and solutions and coordinates and monitors development in their various stages in pursuit of social and economic development across the state, strengthening local companies, and disseminating business opportunities in Minas. With over forty years' experience, INDI has supported over 2,000 projects worth approximately $40 billion in investments. "INDI is aware of the new global sustainability standards. Aligned with society's wishes, we participate in the state's sustainable development and strive for the local economy's qualified insertion in the new global economy," highlights José Frederico Alvares, INDI's president.

Seasoned in the ins-and-outs of the Brazilian economy, Vandick Silveira, president of IBMEC, adds, : "Macroeconomic equilibrium and fiscal rectitude, combined with a solid investment in education, are both essential for truly sustainable growth; we invest in and work for what really transforms society, interacting and looking out for national and regional needs.".

With a vocation for mining, Minas Gerais (Portuguese for 'general mines') also relies on CODEMIG, the Minas Gerais Economic Development Company, which focuses on divulging and promoting knowledge about the state's mineral wealth to attract new investments, increase competitiveness and promote business. In August 2012 , the state government announced new investments in rare earths (lanthanides) production through CODEMIG in a joint operation with the Metallurgy and Mining Brazilian Company (CBMM), which has already begun producing refined rare earth concentrates through a proprietary technology.

The state had already invested $12.5 million in research for this initial production phase. "It's in our plans and in our cash flow schedule, further participation and new investments. We cannot pass up this opportunity, with all the rare earth elements represent," exulted CODEMIG's president, Oswaldo Borges da Costa Filho.

FIEMG, the Minas Gerais State Industry Federation, has also been instrumental in the identification of business opportunities and developing the local economy. They provide services that include consulting support in vital areas, such as credit and finances, taxes, and

Interview with Otavio Azevedo

CEO of Andrade Gutierrez Company

With the new economic outlook for Brazil today, the construction industry grows at a rate far above the average GDP. How do you see the current situation of the construction industry in Brazil, and what forecast could be possible given the current global economic scenario?

We are living a good time for the construction industry in Brazil: there are several major infrastructure contacts under way. We are speaking of ports, airports, roads and railways, for example. The Brazilian government is focused on eliminating the current logistic bottlenecks and has launched a very ambitious concession program covering the spectrum. Aside from the logistical infrastructure, there is heavy investment being made in energy. Major hydropower plants are under construction. In nuclear power, Angra III is under construction, not to mention several new oil and gas power plants, and also several large units in wind energy. There is also the growth of the oil and gas industry with major offshore projects.

Brazil already feels the effects of the global economic scenario, and we had a significant reduction in project contracts. But it's clear that there are more than enough resources available in the world for good investment return opportunities, and in Brazil, given the enormous demand from a population over 200 million strong, we will always be able to move major projects in telecommunications, logistics, oil, and gas, for example. For Brazil, the global crisis may circumstantially affect the rhythm of investments, but not the direction. I believe that in fifteen years Brazil will be very different than it is today. More competitive, better able to distribute incomes. The priority the government is affording infrastructure will transform this country.

Andrade Gutierrez, among the largest players in the country in infrastructure construction, is now entering the offshore oilrig construction market. What are the prospects and opportunities opening to your company in virtue of the new "pre-salt" reserves, in addition to increasing demands from civil construction infrastructure construction for energy, transportation, airports and sanitation?

The oil and gas industry is definitely in full throttle. With the acquisition of an industrial unit in Bahia -- a module factory servicing the offshore oilrig field in Aratu Bay, Bahia -- we now gained access to the largest slice of Petrobras's hefty budget (63 percent) allotted to exploration and production. We are well prepared, because of the investments we made, and the equipped industrial yard is ready with a fully qualified staff, to develop this work.

environmental regulations. For Olavo Machado Júnior, FIEMG's president, the federation's challenges are great, seeing as FIEMG represents the interests of several of the largest national companies. "Our main goals include adding value to local industrial production and promoting business education and training for local entrepreneurs in pursuit of national and international competitiveness," Machado explains.

The second-largest mining company in the world, Vale is present in Minas Gerais, and it believes in innovation as a lever for development, to create the mining of the future. "Our goal is to build business on solid foundations and a respectful relationship with people and the planet," says Vale CEO Murilo Ferreira.

The company's countless projects focus on sustainability and training for their over 130,000 employees. In 2011, Vale and the Minas Gerais government signed a thirty year lease in Ouro Preto for the construction of the Vale Technology Institute (ITV). The campus will spread over 100,000 square meters and will be dedicated to medium and long-term mining research. Vale is investing R$ 162 million in the facility, which is scheduled for inauguration in 2013.

"We have, with the Fiscal Responsibility Law, a most important law: a complementary law [to prior public governance legislation], creating a basic model for development and the control of public expenses, establishing responsibility and accountability, with multiyear planning; the press has a relevant role in this model, which still has room for improvement", ponders Ricardo E. Vieira Coelho, partner at Pinheiro Neto, which is among the most important law firms in Latin America.

In the process of transforming Minas Gerais into an attractive destination for business and investment, the government also revolutionized public management. Brazil is a country that has a rather telling reputation of corruption and convoluted bureaucracy, but Minas Gerais has been successful in breaking free from this stigma with its simple, effective strategies. The international community has recognized this as well, and consolidated the state as a world apart from the rest of the country.

Interview with Antonio Anastasia | Governor of the State of Minas Gerais

After decades, Brazil may finally be considered the Country of the Present (and not the "Country of the Future," a stigma carried for far too long), in spite of several challenges and structural problems that still require solutions. Optimism with accelerated economic growth is widespread. Today the bad news is not local hyperinflation anymore, as in the 1980s and 1990s, but whether the crisis in Europe will take on global proportions anytime soon. How does Brazil fit into the new global economic scenario?

Most nations --especially those with stronger economies -- cannot do without international trade. The exchange of goods and services turn the wheels of growth and of economic and social development. Brazil has managed over the recent decades, due to the changes wrought in macroeconomic policy and the modernization of intra- and extra- state relations, to achieve significant advances. We're still building a modern democracy and, as a consequence, are redesigning the role of the state, with a growing realization that it must foster development through the adoption of policies and standards that will safeguard the interests of various actors in an economy. In this context, Brazil has grown, and today each of the forces that vivify society has a clear role. There is a clear national consensus around the modernization of the economy and of political relations. We are a country with abundant labor, good educational institutions (therefore capable of educating our workforce to meet the market's needs), self-sufficient in most raw materials, and with a great potential for growth and increased production. Thus, even considering the adversity of the international scenario, Brazil without presumption has potential to assume a central role in history in the twenty-first century --given the size of the economy, intellectual strength of its people, and respect for democratic values -- becoming a modernizing influence in the world, with a clear role in the defense of peace and of democratic principle.

"Management Shock": Over the last forty years, the Brazilian government underwent major changes, particularly the transition back to democracy. New practices were developed, bringing expectations of modernization, but many traditional features have not been modernized yet. Modernization will only occur with effective reforms that redistribute power and resources and bring changes in the channels of communication between the public at large and the administration. What steps is the Minas Gerais government taking towards strengthening public administration, increasing transparency and improving human resources management?

In recent years, we implemented in the Minas Gerais state government a series of modernizing measures, a public administration management model we call "management shock". In 2003, we lived under a R$2.4 billion annual budget deficit. In just over one year, we managed to reach the break-even point in public accounts, and from there on, we were able to adopt a series of measures that reversed the picture, put our state back on the international development agency circuit -- including the Inter-American Development Bank-- and the World Bank, recovered our credit rating, and implemented major infrastructure projects capable of changing the economy's profile and dictating a new pace for Minas Gerais's development. Recently, we received an investment grade rating at Standard & Poor's (S&P) of "BBB-", another sign we are moving in the right direction. Now our goal is to encourage the participation of civil society organizations in defining government priorities, which we call Citizen Administration, the third generation of our "management shock" program.

How can we assure the current cycle of investments in Minas Gerais will translate into social inclusion and reduce inequality, ultimately improving the people's quality of life?

Some indicators already point to success in our social inclusion policies. The first and foremost effort is always the creation of jobs, because it is quality jobs that strengthen families and change the social landscape, reducing the social inequalities that still exist in Minas Gerais, both among regions and among the different layers of the population. In recent years, Minas Gerais was among the states that proportionally generated the most jobs in the country according to the Ministry of Labor. In the area of social development, we have several other very concrete results. Minas has already attained, for example, seven of the eight Millennium Development Goals, challenges set by the United Nations Development Program(UNDP) in areas including health, environment, education, equal rights, and fighting poverty. If the world had until 2015 to reduce by 50 percent poverty and misery statistics, Minas Gerais reached this goal in 2006. The UN recommends that gender equality be reached in three years ensuring women's autonomy; in Minas Gerais in 2009 the average number of years of schooling for girls was 8.3 years, compared to 7.8 for boys. I believe the government of Minas may prove to Brazil that good governance is the most effective investment that can be made to achieve social improvement.

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Putin's Petroleum Problem

How Oil Is Holding Russia Back—and How It Could Save It

Thane Gustafson

Last winter, a wave of mass demonstrations suddenly broke the surface calm of Russian politics. A new middle class, born of the oil-based prosperity of the last decade, took to the streets to voice its opposition to the perceived corruption of the political elite, especially United Russia, the ruling party of then Prime Minister Vladimir Putin. For a time, as the protest movement gained momentum, the very foundations of the regime appeared to shake. But in the March 2012 presidential election, Putin managed to win comfortably in the first round, and despite widespread charges of manipulation, even the opposition conceded that he had earned a convincing victory.

The unprecedented protests and Putin's return to the presidency renewed speculation about whether Russia will keep moving toward political and economic modernity or lapse back into Soviet-style stagnation instead. The answer to that question can be found in the country's most important economic sector: oil. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian government has become increasingly dependent on revenue from oil exports. It taxes the lion's share of the

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Thane Gustafson is Professor of Government at Georgetown University and Senior Director of IHS Cambridge Energy Research Associates. This essay is adapted by permission of the publisher from his book *Wheel of Fortune: The Battle for Oil and Power in Russia*, Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

profits of producers and transfers them to the rest of the economy through state-mandated investment programs and state-funded welfare, pensions, and subsidies. The spectacular growth of state income generated by oil has helped keep Putin in power, enabling him to secure the support of key interest groups and maintain, at least until recently, a high level of popularity.

For now, high oil prices are keeping this system running. But sustaining it requires a steadily expanding stream of revenue from commodities, especially oil. In the coming years, however, oil profits are more likely to shrink than grow. For the past two decades, Russia has coasted on an oil legacy inherited from Soviet days. The assets of that era are now deteriorating. Russia is not running out of oil, but it is running out of cheap oil. Much of the oil still in the ground will be more difficult and costly to find and produce. As expenses go up, profit margins will decline. At the same time, the oil industry will have to spend more of its remaining profits on its own renewal.

Neither Russia's oil industry nor the Russian state, however, is adequately prepared to deal with the coming challenge. Both have spent the last two decades competing for control of the country's oil assets instead of cooperating to modernize the industry and prepare for the next stage of development. The state's fiscal and regulatory system, although it has been successful in extracting revenue, constrains investment and stifles innovation. The result is an industry that lags behind its foreign peers, and this at the very moment that the global oil industry is experiencing an unprecedented technological revolution. At the same time, Russia is showing some of the classic signs of what economists call "Dutch disease," the economic stagnation, especially in manufacturing, caused

by an overreliance on commodity exports at the expense of other parts of the economy. In the words of Alexei Kudrin, Russia's finance minister from 2000 to 2011, "The oil industry, from being a locomotive for the economy, has become a brake."

Although Russia's leaders view the country's dependence on oil with growing anxiety, there is no realistic escape: oil will dominate the future of Russia for years to come. But Moscow can still choose how to deal with that dominance. On the one hand, the state could further expand its role in the oil industry, squeezing out private shareholders, forcing down dividends, and dictating where the oil companies invest their resources. But that is unlikely to provide much incentive for efficiency or innovation. On the other hand, it could follow a more productive path. The government could rein in its spending, thereby reducing the need for oil revenues, and loosen its grip on the oil industry, so as to encourage the type of innovation that will renew it.

And so oil, paradoxically, is both a force for prolonged political and economic stasis and Russia's best hope for escaping it. For political leaders in Moscow, the oil industry inherited from Soviet times still generates enough income to support a comfortable political and economic system in which it is all too tempting to linger. Only if this industry modernizes will Russia have the revenues to support any sort of transition—and that will happen only if the state and its policies modernize along with it. Yet for now, thanks to high oil prices, the leadership seems more inclined to choose the status quo than adaptation.

BUST AND BOOM

The origins of the present dilemma lie in Russia's difficult exit from its Soviet past. Russia wasn't always so addicted to oil. Only in the last decade and a half of the Soviet Union's existence did its leaders use oil and gas exports as a means of propping up their sagging system and avoiding change. Then, when the Soviet industrial economy imploded, it left natural resources, most notably oil and gas, as the chief remaining sources of value.

The oil industry of the Soviet era was highly developed but flawed. Most of its production came from a handful of giant fields

in western Siberia that had been damaged by shortsighted practices caused by political pressure to maximize production. Keeping the oil flowing required massive increases in capital investment, but with the sudden drop in world oil prices in 1986 and the financial crisis that followed, the weakened Soviet state was no longer able to provide the requisite financing. With the end of the Soviet system, oil investment collapsed, and production plummeted. Russia's oil output, which was the highest in the world as late as 1987, dropped steadily over the following nine years, before bottoming out in 1996 at around half the Soviet-era peak.

Although Russia's leaders view the country's dependence on oil with growing anxiety, there is no realistic escape.

The government began denationalizing the oil industry in 1992, and a new generation of privately owned oil companies was born. But the oil in Russia's ground still belonged to Moscow, as did the pipeline system. The state still controlled the borders and the customs posts, however tenuously. It retained the authority, if not always the actual power, to control exports, especially of crude oil. Thus, despite its apparent liberation, the oil industry remained enmeshed in a system of government controls that, although half comatose in the 1990s, could be revived at virtually a moment's notice.

Nevertheless, privatization, combined with a timely recovery of oil prices, had its effect. Oil production began growing again in 1999 and by 2002 was increasing at nearly ten percent per year, with seemingly no end in sight. In 2002, the newly privatized oil companies accounted for over 83 percent of Russian oil output. Two new industry leaders, Yukos and Sibneft, under the command of two self-made entrepreneurs, Mikhail Khodorkovsky and Roman Abramovich, applied production methods and management techniques—chiefly, hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling—never seen before in Russia. Other private oil companies were following close behind, and investors snapped up shares in them on Western stock exchanges.

Putin, when he was elected president in 2000, initially sounded like a classic economic liberal, championing capitalism and economic

reform. He appeared to have reached a modus vivendi with the private-sector oligarchs of the Yeltsin years, based on a principle of mutual noninterference. Foreign oil companies became increasingly active in Russia, and the new Russian oil industry launched ambitious plans for investment in Caspian Sea reserves, a pipeline to China, refineries in Europe, and a major new supply line to North America. To many observers at the time, it appeared that the victory of free-market capitalism in Russia was all but complete.

But as oil prices rose throughout the decade, Russia's young oil companies became irresistible prizes for an increasingly powerful state. Behind the apparent dominance of the private companies, a newly resurgent state-owned oil corporation, Rosneft, was rapidly gaining strength. The Russian government, armed with powerful new tax laws, was already capturing a growing share of the private companies' profits and would go on to capture far more. Khodorkovsky's resistance to the state's reassertion of power brought him into bitter conflict with Putin (especially when Khodorkovsky's political ambitions became clear), and in 2003, Khodorkovsky was arrested on charges of tax evasion, and the government began expropriating Yukos. In the wake of the Yukos affair, the double-digit growth in Russian oil production soon subsided. By the middle of the decade, the private sector had been clipped back, the private owners had been humbled, the oil boom was over—and the state was back.

Even so, oil production continued to grow, if more slowly than before, and for a time, the Russian political and economic system seemed to have reached a stable equilibrium. But then came the 2008 global financial crisis and the recession that followed. Global oil prices dropped sharply, and in 2009, Russia's GDP fell by 7.8 percent—the steepest drop of any major economy. The oil companies cut back spending, and in 2008, Russian oil production declined for the first time since the mid-1990s.

PROFITS IN PERIL

In the years since the crisis, overall oil output has recovered, but signs of trouble are everywhere. Russian oil production is on track to

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increase this year by about one percent, but only at the price of a skyrocketing rise in capital spending. Investment in the oil fields, which was up by 34 percent in 2011 to a record $31 billion, could well reach $40 billion this year. Despite the industry's best efforts, its western Siberian core has entered a long-term decline. If overall output is still growing, it is only thanks to a handful of new fields, located mainly in the frontier regions of eastern Siberia, where production is more expensive. The Energy Ministry has warned Russia's leadership that, on the current trajectory, oil production could well be in decline by 2020.

To prevent that outcome, the industry will have to search beyond its Soviet-era perimeter for new sources of oil: offshore in the Arctic, in the remote eastern Siberian wilderness, and in the deeper horizons of western Siberia. The fields in these places are variously deeper, hotter (or colder), higher in pressure, higher in sulfur content, more remote, or more geologically complex than those tapped in Russia today. So it will take more time and more money to extract oil from them.

The problem, however, is that Russia's oil industry has been slow to replace the inefficient practices of the command-economy era with more modern management structures and techniques. Although hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling have by now become standard throughout the Russian industry, global oil technology has since moved on, and the Russian oil companies have yet to follow. In particular, the Russian oil companies have only limited experience in the Arctic offshore, which will likely provide much of Russia's oil and gas in the future.

The basic reason for the industry's failure to evolve is straightforward: so long as the inherited fields continue to produce, companies see little need to change. In addition, the state's heavy tax burden and restrictive regulations have left the companies—both state-owned and private—little incentive to invest in new technology or to improve their efficiency. And without progress on these fronts, expenses will continue to rise inexorably. Higher costs will mean lower profits and, ultimately, lower revenues for the state.

In other words, the Russian state's primary source of income is in jeopardy, even as its dependence on it continues to grow. Oil and gas

(the price of which is largely linked to oil) together account for about 30 percent of Russian GDP, and since 2000, the steady rise in prices has driven about half of Russia's GDP growth. Today, oil provides nearly 40 percent of the government's tax revenues. Thus, the Russian economy and state are acutely vulnerable to any decline in oil profits.

The pressure would be especially severe in the event of a decline in oil prices. Oil prices are back to record-high levels, and it is easy to imagine them staying that way. Rising demand from Asia and the Middle East, continuing increases in the costs of finding and producing oil, and growing instability in places where oil is produced (including the Middle East and Africa) could well keep pushing oil prices higher and higher. But it is not difficult to imagine the opposite scenario. In North America, the production of gas found in underground shale basins and of "tight oil" trapped in compact rock formations, made possible by new technology, is gathering speed at an astonishing rate, far outstripping all forecasts. As innovative techniques for producing shale gas and tight oil spread to the rest of the world, they are dramatically altering the outlook for energy production. The global economy may now stand on the threshold of a new era of more abundant hydrocarbons, possibly at lower prices.

The Energy Ministry has warned Russia's leadership that, on the current trajectory, oil production could well be in decline by 2020.

Normally, one might expect plentiful supplies and lower prices to stimulate consumption, but that may not be true for tomorrow's oil demand. Today's high prices have eaten into demand so much that the effects will be felt for a long time (just as they were for two decades after the oil shocks of the 1970s). Oil use has already peaked in the industrialized world, chiefly in Europe and the United States. Meanwhile, economic growth has slowed in many of the emerging-market countries, particularly in China and India, causing the growth of oil demand to slow as well. Lastly, some of the potential growth of oil demand will be met by natural gas. All these forces could combine to hold back oil demand and keep oil prices in check.

For now, the forces pushing prices higher are still dominant. But those that will eventually depress prices are getting stronger, and

the likelihood of a longer-term environment of lower oil prices is increasing. Yet even if oil prices do no more than remain at today's levels, the combination of higher oil costs, lower profits, and a lower tax take for the government places Russia's entire system of distributing oil wealth at risk.

ESCAPE PLANS

MANY IN Russia's ruling elite realize that trouble lies ahead. Since the 2008 crash, a remarkable debate has begun about the dangers of natural resource dependence—one of those periodic self-examinations for which the Russians are famous. But although the goal is clear, there is no consensus on how to achieve it. Instead, there are three competing plans for escaping from oil dependence: a program of high-tech modernization, associated with Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev; a market-reform model, championed by Russia's former finance minister, Kudrin; and Putin's preferred plan of maintaining the same strong state role as today.

During his four years as president, Medvedev put forward an ambitious agenda of economic modernization and diversification, amounting to a call for a change of direction from the policies of the previous decade. "For centuries," he declared in 2010, "we have shipped our raw materials abroad, and imported all the 'smart' products." This state of affairs has profoundly discouraged would-be innovators and entrepreneurs. One of Medvedev's supporters, Andrei Klepach, a deputy economic development minister, put the situation even more pungently: "Russia," he said, has become "a country that exports oil, girls, and future Nobel Prize laureates."

The program Medvedev advanced centered on high-tech innovation, in computers, nanotechnology, advanced medicine, nuclear power, and space. Drawing inspiration from Silicon Valley, he announced plans for a new innovation center called Skolkovo. He even opened a Twitter account to signal the new direction. Energy played an important role in his program, but the focus was not on increasing supply but on limiting consumption by becoming more energy efficient. Meanwhile, Medvedev and his supporters contended, the government should invest oil revenues in high-tech manufacturing

and put as little as possible back into the oil sector itself. For many Russians, however, Medvedev's program, in its ambition and sweep, was disturbingly reminiscent of the Soviet five-year plans. It involved the same top-down modernization by political mandate, the same drive to overcome decades of lag in one giant leap.

In contrast, the vision put forward by Kudrin—whose policies did much to keep Russians' finances on an even keel—marks a return to the agenda of market-oriented reform. In his view, state budgets have spiraled out of control, and the days of rapidly increasing oil production and high oil prices are coming to an end. Kudrin openly criticized Medvedev's modernization program and the Kremlin's plans to increase military spending. He reserved special ire for the Ministry of Economic Development's aim to fund Russia's modernization through annual deficits. The state should strive to create the best possible investment climate, Kudrin argued, and stop trying to channel investment through large state corporations, since these breed corruption and lead to capital flight. Only if inflation remains low, the currency stays stable, and property rights are protected will entrepreneurs have an incentive to take risks and invest in Russia. In many ways, Kudrin's formula represents a revival of the program Putin appeared to back in his first term. But in 2011, finding no support for his proposals, Kudrin resigned from the government.

In Putin's view, the state remains the engine of growth; the job of the oil industry is simply to provide the fuel for it.

Putin's vision differs from Medvedev's and Kudrin's not so much in its goals as in its means. For Putin, oil and gas remain the only realistic source of capital for Russia's growth, and the best way to enhance the industry's performance is to maintain strong state control. He sees oil as still abundant in Russia and contends that if supplies seem short, companies must simply look harder. In his conception, private oil companies' loyalties should lie not with their shareholders but with the state. In fact, Putin's preferred vehicle for finding, producing, and transporting oil is a large state-owned company that mostly exports refined products, rather

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than crude oil. In his view, the state remains the engine of growth and progress; the job of the oil industry is simply to provide the fuel for it.

Putin denounces Russia's dependence on oil just as Medvedev and Kudrin have. But his view is tempered by the belief that oil can play an indispensable role for decades to come, not only as a source of revenue but also as an instrument of regional development at home and geopolitical influence abroad. Unlike Medvedev and his team, Putin praises the oil industry as a potential technological leader, although to him, it takes second place to supposedly more advanced industries, such as the military sector. As he sees it, the state should continue to channel revenues from oil to support other strategic sectors.

Characteristically, Putin has sought to push the Russian oil companies toward change through a combination of exhortation and administrative pressure, along with an assortment of ad hoc tax breaks. He has encouraged Rosneft, now under the leadership of his longtime associate Igor Sechin, to conclude a series of alliances with major foreign oil companies to develop Russia's skills in Arctic offshore exploration and production. These partnerships could mark an important new chapter in the relationship between the Russian oil companies and the global oil industry. Putin and Sechin's strong support for them suggests they understand the urgency of the situation and are responding to it—yet by essentially the same state-led means that they have favored in the past.

So far, as Putin begins his third term as president, his vision dominates. One might suppose, indeed, that with Medvedev's demotion to the premiership and Kudrin's departure from the government, their views have lost influence altogether. Yet in reality, all three remain strongly represented, and the actual direction of policy is likely to reflect a continuing competition among them.

Despite their apparent differences, all three visions are bullish on Russia's capacity to compete in the global economy as a leading producer of high-tech products and services. But that, to put it mildly, is a brave bet, no matter whose vision prevails. Russia, with its diminished human and physical capital, will be hard-pressed to keep up with the emerging economies of Asia and the mature

knowledge economy of the United States, which continues to lead the world in innovation and entrepreneurship. For the foreseeable future, hydrocarbons will remain Russia's chief comparative advantage.

THE COMING FISCAL CRISIS

Although Putin managed to win the presidential election with ease this time, in 2018, when he could run yet again, it will not be so easy. By then, Putin will have been president for 14 years and the de facto head of the country for nearly 19. The opposition will be better organized, and given the rapid spread of the Internet and social networking in Russia, it will have gained strength and depth outside the capital. By that time, a whole post-Soviet generation will have come of age. New leaders will have emerged, possibly from regions outside Moscow, where political life is waking up. The opposition will find increased support from a population that will feel even more alienated by the perceived excesses of the favored elites than it does today. Whatever signs of wear the regime is showing today will be all the more severe by the end of the decade.

Still, so long as the Kremlin is able to retain the loyalty of the business and political elites and continue running the welfare system on which the majority of the population depends, the regime is likely to remain stable. But sometime in the coming decade—just when is impossible to predict, because it hinges on so many variables—the state could well see oil revenues decline, even as its reliance on them grows. Even if world oil prices remain at their current highs, Russia's budget and trade balance surpluses will shrink, and the tide of money that has enabled the Kremlin to meet everyone's growing expectations for the past decade will vanish. Then and only then will the preconditions for the end of the Putin era be present.

At that point, Russia will not necessarily plunge into crisis overnight. Thanks to a decade of prudent fiscal and monetary management—largely the work of Kudrin—the government will likely have plenty of room to borrow; Russia's external debt is currently at an ultralow 15 percent of GDP. The ruble could be allowed to devalue, which would curtail imports and make exports more competitive. Russia

could spend from its foreign currency reserves, which rank today as the third largest in the world. Yet these are only temporary fixes. Major spending programs will have to be cut back, including socially sensitive ones, such as pensions and subsidies. The state's rainy-day funds will be depleted. Inflation will eat away at the population's savings. The promise of growing prosperity, which has sustained the popularity and legitimacy of the present regime for so long, will erode.

Russia can choose to treat oil as a prize in a new division of spoils or as a catalyst for reform.

In the midst of all this, the state will finally be driven to confront head-on the difficult choice it has long avoided: whether to lessen the tax burden it imposes on the oil industry so as to enable the industry to invest in the next generation of fields and technologies. What the state was unwilling to do more than marginally in the past it will be forced to do on a much larger scale in the future, when it will no longer enjoy comfortable surpluses. In this and other ways, the politics of the expanding pie will give way to the much more painful politics of the shrinking one.

One can imagine two ways Russia could respond to this crisis. The first response would be counterproductive. Until now, oil profits have been divided among three main groups: shareholders, consumers, and the state. As the flow of profits tapers off, the temptation will grow for state players to squeeze out the remaining private owners, and the result would be a campaign of nationalizations. Were that to occur, the interest groups within the present power structure—the rival security services, the various generations of oligarchs, and so on—would fight with one another over the spoils, and a weakened Kremlin would have a hard time keeping order. Despite lower oil revenues, policymakers would remain reluctant to cut welfare payments to the population, causing budget deficits to grow. With taxes still prohibitively high, the oil companies, even though they will be increasingly state-owned, would respond by cutting back investment, leading to lower production. The result would be a downward spiral, as revenues shrank and the state sank deeper into debt.

But Russia's leaders could pursue a second, more constructive response. The state would have to reduce its dependence on oil revenues.

This would mean adopting the main recommendations of Kudrin's program: reforming the pension and welfare systems, cutting back subsidies to regional governments and dying industries, trimming military expenditures, and generally restoring budgetary discipline and improving the investment climate. Meanwhile, the state would have to refrain from wasteful ad hoc tax breaks and subsidies for the state's pet causes and replace them with a modern and predictable system of profit-based taxation. It would also have to improve the regulatory and legal systems and stimulate changes in the structure of the oil industry itself, so as to encourage the innovation and entrepreneurship that will bring about its renaissance. This combination of budgetary and industrial reform is crucial; Russia will not be able to manage the coming crisis unless it fixes both its oil dependence and its struggling oil industry.

Some of the country's energy insiders see another way out, however. Lately, news of the accelerating revolution in the production of tight oil in the United States has taken Russia's oil sector by storm. The surprise turnaround of oil production in the United States has suddenly raised hopes that the Russian oil industry could achieve, by essentially the same means and in equally short order, a revival of its western Siberian fields and a new lease on life.

This is an alluring vision, but it depends on one big assumption: that the competition, innovation, and trial and error that have driven the tight-oil revolution in the United States can occur in Russia. But these are the very elements that are mostly missing in the Russian oil industry today, and unless Russia undertakes meaningful reforms, the potential of tight oil there will be only partly and slowly realized.

Will Moscow choose reform? Over the past two decades, the country has revolutionized its economy, rewritten its laws, and reentered the world. In the process, talented and determined people have laid valuable foundations for a modern state. At the same time, the Soviet past continues to hold both people and institutions in its grip. The attempt by Putin to create what he calls a "vertical of power"—his system of centralized control—has impeded progress and bred corruption. That formula will lead to a dead end. And so Russia now stands at a crossroads. Whichever path it chooses, oil will be a central part of the choice—whether as a prize in a new division of spoils or as a catalyst for reform.

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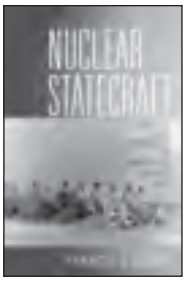

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It's Hard to Make It in America

How the United States Stopped Being the Land of Opportunity

Lane Kenworthy

For all the differences between Democrats and Republicans that were laid bare during the 2012 U.S. presidential campaign, the parties' standard-bearers, Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, do seem to have agreed on one thing: the importance of equal opportunity. In remarks in Chicago in August, Obama called for an "America where no matter who you are, no matter what you look like, no matter where you come from, no matter what your last name is, no matter who you love, you can make it here if you try." The same month, he urged the Supreme Court to uphold affirmative action in public universities, putting his weight behind what has been a mainstay of U.S. equal opportunity legislation since the 1960s. Days later, the Republican vice presidential nominee, Paul Ryan, echoed Obama's sentiment, saying, "We promise equal opportunity, not equal outcomes." Romney, too, argued that whereas Obama "wants to turn America into a European-style entitlement society," his administration would "ensure that we remain a free and prosperous land of opportunity."

It is no accident that both campaigns chose to emphasize equality of opportunity. It has long been at the center of the American ethos. And one of the United States' major successes in the last half century has been its progress toward ensuring that its citizens get roughly the

Lane Kenworthy is Professor of Sociology and Political Science at the University of Arizona.

same basic chances in life, regardless of gender or race. Today, women are more likely to graduate from college than men and are catching up in employment and earnings, too. The gap between whites and nonwhites has narrowed as well, albeit less dramatically.

Yet this achievement has been double edged. As gender and race have become less significant barriers to advancement, family background, an obstacle considered more relevant in earlier eras, has reemerged. Today, people who were born worse off tend to have fewer opportunities in life.

The United States has lost its historical distinction as the land of opportunity.

Of course, there is no perfect way to measure opportunities. The best method devised thus far is to look at outcomes: college completion, gainful employment, and sufficient income. If the average outcome for one group far outpaces that for another, social scientists conclude that the first group had greater opportunities. Comparing outcomes is not foolproof, as differences in outcomes can result from differences in effort. But a person's effort is itself shaped by the circumstances he or she encounters.

To assess equality of opportunity among people from different family backgrounds, the measure of outcome that social scientists look at is relative intergenerational mobility—a person's position on the income ladder relative to his or her parents' position. Social scientists don't have as much information as they would like about the extent of relative intergenerational mobility, its movement over time, and its causes. The data requirements are stiff; analysts need a survey that collects information about citizens' incomes and other aspects of their life circumstances, then does the same for their children, and for their children's children, and so on. The best assessment of this type in the United States, the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, has been around only since the late 1960s.

Even so, there is general consensus among social scientists on a few basic points. First, an American born into a family in the bottom fifth of incomes between the mid-1960s and the mid-1980s has roughly a 30 percent chance of reaching the middle fifth or higher

in adulthood, whereas an American born into the top fifth has an 80 percent chance of ending up in the middle fifth or higher. (In a society with perfectly equal opportunity, every person would have the same chance—20 percent—of landing on each of the five rungs of the income ladder and a 60 percent chance of landing on the middle rung or a higher one.) This discrepancy means that there is considerable inequality of opportunity among Americans from different family backgrounds.

Second, inequality of opportunity has increased in recent decades. The data do not permit airtight conclusions. Still, available compilations of test scores, years of schooling completed, occupations, and incomes of parents and their children strongly suggest that the opportunity gap, which was narrowing until the 1970s, is now widening.

Third, in a sharp reversal of historical trends, there is now less equality of opportunity in the United States than in most other wealthy democratic nations. Data exist for ten of the United States' peer countries (rich long-standing democracies). The United States has less relative intergenerational mobility than eight of them; Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom all do better. The United States is on par with France and Italy.

So how did the United States get here? Why did it falter where other nations have not? And how can it fix the problem? On the right, a standard proposal is to strengthen families. On the left, a recent favorite is to reduce income inequality. And everyone supports improving education. To know which proposals would work best, it helps to understand the roots of the new opportunity gap.

THE LOST OPPORTUNITY COST

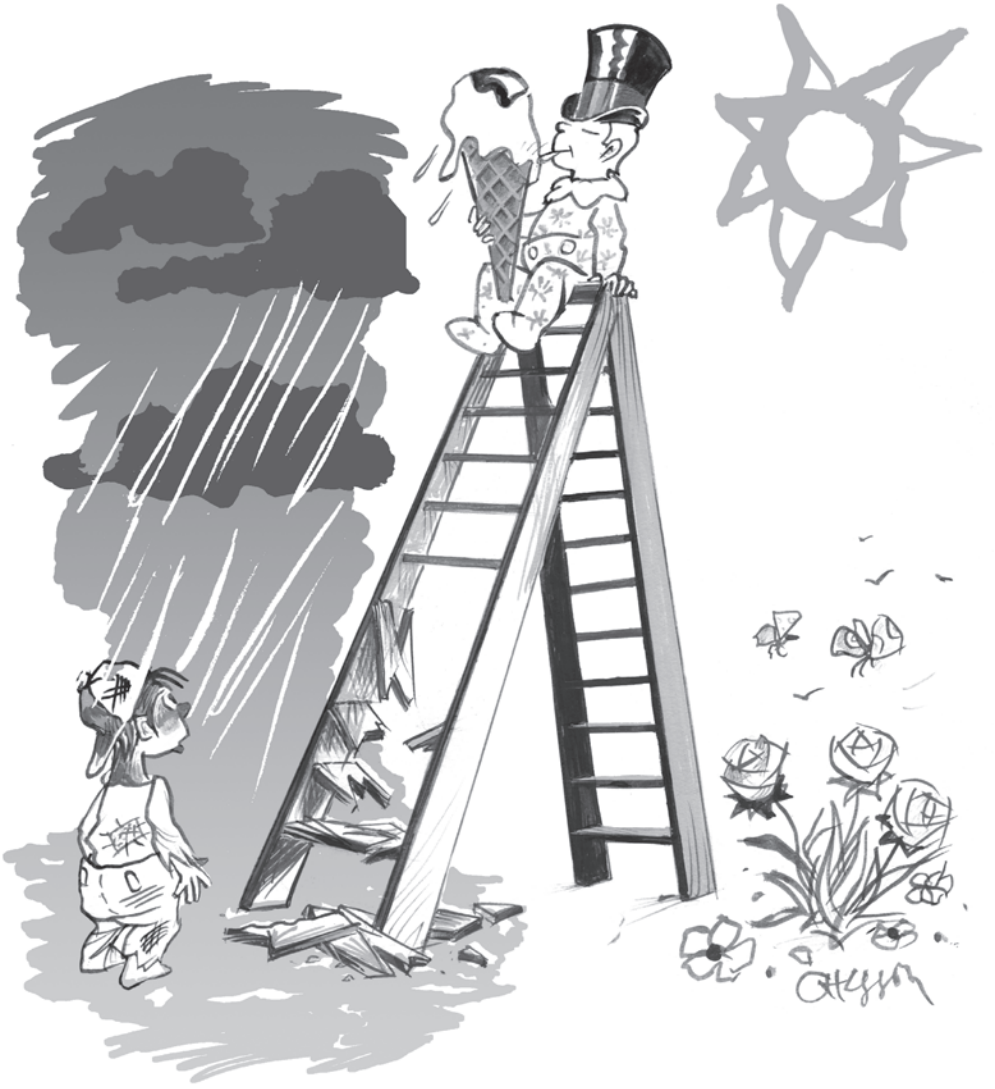
Between the mid-1800s and the 1970s, differences in opportunity based on family circumstances declined steadily. As the formerly farming-based U.S. labor force shifted to manufacturing, many Americans joined the paid labor force, allowing an increasing share of them to move onto and up the income ladder. Elementary education became universal, and secondary education expanded. Then, in the 1960s and 1970s, school desegregation, the outlawing of discrimination

in college admissions and hiring, and the introduction of affirmative action programs helped open economic doors for an even wider swath of Americans.

But since the 1970s, the United States has been moving in the opposite direction. A host of economic and social shifts seem to have widened the opportunity gap between Americans from low-income families and those from high-income families. First, family life has changed, at least for some. The share of poorer children growing up with both biological parents has fallen sharply, whereas there has been less change among the wealthy. About 88 percent of children from high-income homes grow up with married parents. That is down from 96 percent four decades ago. Meanwhile, only 41 percent of poorer children grow up in homes with married parents, down from 77 percent four decades ago. That has hurt poorer children's chances of success, since children who live with both of their parents are more likely, even accounting for income, to fare better in school, stay out of trouble with the law, maintain lasting relationships, and earn higher incomes as adults.

The modern culture of intensive parenting—a largely middle- and upper-class phenomenon—adds to the gap. Low-income parents are not able to spend as much on goods and services aimed at enriching their children, such as music lessons, travel, and summer camp. Low-income parents also tend to read less to their children and provide less help with schoolwork. They are less likely to set and enforce clear rules and routines for their children. And they are less likely to encourage their children to aspire to high achievement in school and at work.

Furthermore, a generation ago, most preschool-aged children stayed at home with their mothers. Now, many are enrolled in some sort of child care. But the quality of their experiences varies. Affluent parents can send their children to nationally recognized education-oriented preschools. Poorer parents might have little choice but to leave their children with a neighborhood babysitter who plops them in front of the television. Research by the economist James Heckman and others finds that much of the gap in cognitive and noncognitive skills between children from poor homes and those from affluent homes is already present by the time they enter kindergarten.



Things don't improve once children reach grade school. Funding for public K–12 schools, which used to vary sharply across school districts, has become more even in recent decades. Nevertheless, a large difference remains in the quality of education between the best and the worst schools, and the poorest neighborhoods often have the weakest schools. According to data compiled by Sean Reardon of Stanford University's School of Education, the gap in average test scores between elementary- and secondary-school children from high-income families and those from low-income families has risen steadily in recent decades. Among children born in 1970, those from high-income homes scored, on average, about three-quarters of a standard deviation higher on math and reading tests than those from

low-income homes. Among children born in 2000, the gap has grown to one and a quarter standard deviations. That is much larger than the gap between white and black children.

Partly because they tend to be far behind at the end of high school, and partly because college has gotten so expensive, children from poor backgrounds are less likely than others to enter and complete college. The economists Martha Bailey and Susan Dynarski have compared the college completion rates of Americans who grew up in the 1960s and 1970s to the rates of those who grew up in the 1980s and 1990s. The share of young adults from high-income homes that got a four-year college degree rose from 36 percent in the first group to 54 percent in the second group. The share from low-income homes, however, stayed almost flat, rising only from five percent to nine percent.

When it comes time to get a job, the story is no better. Low-income parents tend to have fewer valuable connections to help their children find good jobs. Some people from poor homes are further hampered by a lack of English-language skills. Another disadvantage for the lower-income population is that in the 1970s and 1980s, the United States began incarcerating a lot more young men, including many for minor offenses. Having a criminal record makes it all the more difficult to get a stable job with decent pay—if, that is, good jobs still exist. A number of developments, including technological advances, globalization, a loss of manufacturing employment, and the decline of unions, have reduced the number of jobs that require limited skills but pay a middle-class wage—the very kind of jobs that once moved poorer Americans into the middle class.

One solution would be to get more money into the hands of low-income families with children.

Finally, changes in partner selection have also widened the opportunity gap. Not only do those from better-off families tend to end up with more schooling and higher-paying jobs; they are more likely than ever to marry (or cohabit with) others like themselves, according to research by the sociologists Christine Schwartz and Robert Mare.

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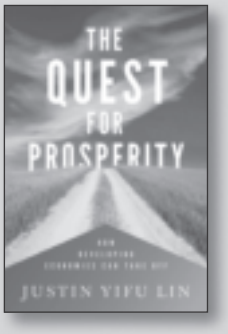

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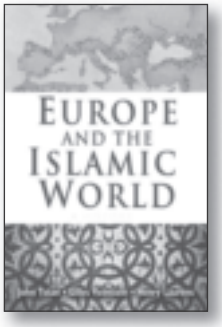

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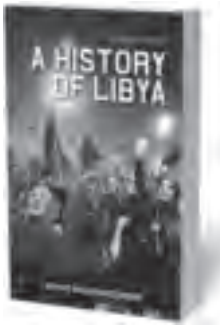

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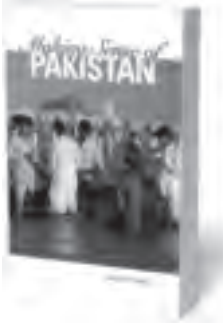

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For all these reasons, the gap in opportunity between the United States' rich and poor has expanded in recent decades. Left unchecked, the trend threatens not only to offset the progress the United States has made on gender and racial equality but also to usher in a future of deep and hardened class divisions.

It might be tempting to shrug and conclude that the high and increasing opportunity gap in the United States is an unfortunate but inevitable consequence of economic and social shifts. The problem with this reaction is that other affluent democracies do better. The United States has lost its historical distinction as the land of opportunity. Yet there is at least some good news: the fact that other countries are more successful in this area suggests that with the right policies, the United States could do better, too.

VALUABLE FAMILIES

One simple, straightforward solution would be to get more money into the hands of low-income families with children. The education policy experts Greg Duncan, Ariel Kalil, and Kathleen Ziol-Guest have found that for children who grew up in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s, an increase in family income of a mere $3,000 during a person's first five years of life was associated with nearly 20 percent higher earnings later in life. The finding suggests that government cash transfers of just a few thousand dollars could give a significant lifelong boost to the children who need it most. Most other affluent countries, including those that do better on equality of opportunity, offer a universal "child allowance" that does exactly this. In Canada, for instance, a family with two children receives an annual allowance of around $3,000, and low-income families with two children might receive more than $6,000. The United States has only a weaker version of the benefit, the Child Tax Credit, which doles out a maximum of just $1,000 a year per child. Moreover, receipt of the money is contingent on filing a federal tax return, which not all low-income families do.

Other solutions involve Washington getting involved in home life. Fewer children in the United States grow up with both biological parents than in any other affluent country for which data are available.

To remedy this, some, such as Barbara Dafoe Whitehead and David Popenoe, co-directors of the National Marriage Project at Rutgers, favor efforts to promote marriage. But research by the sociologists Kathryn Edin, Sara McLanahan, and Paula England and others suggests that this strategy is misplaced. Since women today need less from marriage and expect more from it than they used to, those who are better educated and better off tend to take more time to get established in their jobs and find good partners, which enhances the likelihood of a lasting marriage (or cohabitation). They delay childbearing as well. Among poorer and less-educated women, who see little prospect of a fulfilling and lucrative career, having a child in their teens or early 20s remains common. These women are less likely to stay with a partner: they have had less time to mature personally and to find a person with whom they are compatible, their partners are more likely to have weak financial prospects and a preference for traditional gender roles, and the presence of a child heightens financial and interpersonal tensions. Given all this, convincing more young low-income couples who get pregnant to marry is unlikely to produce many lasting relationships.

Genuine progress probably hinges on poor or less-educated women delaying childbirth. Eventually, this will happen; the teen birthrate has already been dropping for nearly two decades, albeit slowly. For its part, Washington (or any other government) has only limited tools to speed it up. The best might be an education campaign, as Ron Haskins and Isabelle Sawhill, policy experts at the Brookings Institution, have suggested, that focuses on the benefits of the "success sequence": first education, then a stable job, then marriage, and then children.

What about parenting practices, which have a clear effect on childhood development? Although few Americans support extensive government intrusion into home life, one potentially acceptable way that Washington and state governments could try to improve parenting is by paying for home visits by nurses or counselors and providing free or low-cost parenting classes. Getting people to change their behavior and routines is very difficult, so the benefits of such programs are inevitably modest. Nonetheless, in a recent review of existing research, the sociologist Frank Furstenberg found evidence that

programs aimed at teaching better practices to parents of children at middle-school age or younger yield some improvements in school readiness and school performance.

MAKING THE GRADE

GIVEN THE difficulties of altering home life, improving schools remains the United States' main tool for assisting less-advantaged children. For all their inadequacies, public schools do help equalize opportunity by improving students' cognitive abilities. During summer vacation, the cognitive abilities of children in low-income families tend to regress, relative to those of their more advantaged peers. In other words, these children would lag even further behind if they never attended school.

A universal system of affordable, educational child care and preschool could help close the capability gap that opens up during the early years of life. Additionally, it would facilitate parents' employment and thereby boost household incomes, making it doubly helpful for children in low-income families. The Nordic countries offer some lessons: in the 1960s and 1970s, these countries introduced paid maternity leave and publicly funded child care. Today, early education teachers there have training and pay comparable to those of elementary school teachers. The cost of early education is capped at around ten percent of household income. In all these countries, a person's cognitive abilities, likelihood of completing high school and college, and eventual success in the job market tend to be less heavily determined by his or her family's wealth and makeup than in the United States.

There has been some movement to expand the United States' child-care and educational systems at the state level in the past two decades. Most states now have full-day public kindergarten, and some have added public preschool for four-year-olds. But the progress has been very slow, and in recent years, it has been set back by state revenue shortfalls. Assistance from Washington would be of considerable help.

The equalizing effects of college, too, cannot be overstated. Among Americans whose family incomes at birth are in the bottom fifth but who get four-year college degrees, 53 percent end up in the

middle fifth or higher. That is pretty close to the 60 percent chance they would have with perfectly equal opportunity. Washington needs to do better at helping people from less-advantaged homes afford college. The average in-state tuition at an American four-year public university exceeds $8,000. In Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and Finland, attending four-year public universities is free. According to data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, in those nations, the odds that a person whose parents did not complete high school will attend college are between 40 and 60 percent, compared with just 30 percent in the United States.

WORKING ON LABOR

Employment is the next challenge. First, the low-hanging fruit: since a prison record impedes labor-market success, the United States should rethink its approach to punishment for nonviolent drug offenders. According to the sociologist Bruce Western, states that have reduced imprisonment over the past decade, instead turning to alternative punishments, such as fines and community corrections programs, have experienced drops in crime similar to states that have increased imprisonment. If other states were to follow suit, the United States could avoid needlessly undermining the employment opportunities of a significant number of young men from less-advantaged homes.

Broader trends in the labor market since the 1970s present a stickier problem. Hourly wages at the median and below have not budged in inflation-adjusted terms. In the 1980s and 1990s, the United States created a lot of new jobs. These facilitated the movement of women into the work force and thereby helped many households enjoy rising incomes despite the stagnation in wages. But in the early years of this century, employment growth stopped, and the subsequent recession and slow recovery have dealt a crushing blow to the less skilled. The employment rate among men aged 25–54 who did not finish high school dropped by ten percentage points between 2007 and 2010.

Eventually, the U.S. economy will get back on track, but that will not automatically lead to more jobs and higher wages. The lone period of sustained wage growth at the middle rung and below

occurred in the late 1990s. What distinguishes that period is that the Federal Reserve allowed the unemployment rate to drop to four percent, well below what many economists believed to be the level at which inflation would accelerate. If and when the United States returns to low unemployment, it will need the Federal Reserve to again be willing to allow wages to rise significantly before stepping on the brakes.

It would be foolish to count on this, though, so the United States would do well to consider alternative strategies. One useful tool might be the Earned Income Tax Credit. At the moment, the EITC provides an annual subsidy of up to $6,000 to households with less than $50,000 in earnings. That is helpful, but for a person with no children, the credit amounts to less than $500. That group—young adults with low earnings and no children—includes many Americans who grew up in disadvantaged circumstances. If the economy is growing but wages are not, the United States can and should offer a bigger boost to these people's incomes.

In the past year, a number of commentators, most notably Alan Krueger, chair of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, have suggested that reversing the rise in income inequality could improve economic mobility in the United States. After all, among the countries for which there are comparable data, those with less income inequality tend to have higher relative intergenerational mobility. The United States was already on the high end of the income-inequality scale a generation ago, and since then it has moved even further in that direction.

Yet general calls to reduce income inequality offer little help in identifying which policies to pursue. Consider three possibilities. First, imagine that Washington legislated a radical reduction in the pay differentials for various types of jobs. (Narrower pay differentials account for part of the smaller opportunity gaps in the Nordic countries.) This certainly would reduce income inequality. It would also reduce opportunity inequality: at least in the first generation, even if someone's capabilities matched perfectly those of his or her parents, his or her income would not. But such a drastic step is not likely to happen, in part because few Americans would support it. Second, suppose the United States were to raise income tax rates for the

top one percent of households and lower them for middle-class households. Such a move would reduce income inequality, but it would do little to improve the opportunities of children in low-income families. Third, suppose the United States increased tax rates for all households and used the revenue to fund universal early education. (As the political scientist Andrea Campbell recently wrote in these pages, most other advanced democracies devote far more tax revenue to social programs.) That step would do little to counter income inequality, but it could substantially expand opportunity. A reduction in income inequality, in short, is neither necessary nor sufficient for achieving a reduction in inequality of opportunity.

LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

For all that other countries' experiences can teach the United States, there are also lessons the United States should take from its own history. The most direct way that Washington has made opportunity more equal in the past has been through affirmative action. Affirmative action is not a strategy that many other affluent countries have embraced, but it has a proven track record in the United States. Since the late 1960s, affirmative action programs for college admissions and for hiring have expanded opportunities for women and various minority groups.

Now, a number of observers from across the partisan spectrum, from Richard Kahlenberg, a senior fellow at the left-leaning Century Foundation, to Charles Murray, a fellow at the right-leaning American Enterprise Institute, favor shifting the focus of affirmative action efforts from race and gender to family background. Emphasizing family background would continue to disproportionately help African American and Latino children, since they are more likely to come from families with low incomes and other disadvantages. Indeed, it would do more to help poor black and Latino children than traditional race-based affirmative action programs, which have mainly benefited middle-class members of such minority groups.

In response to court rulings and ballot initiatives outlawing consideration of race in admissions decisions, some public university systems, including those of California and Texas, have already moved in this

direction. One approach guarantees the top ten percent of students graduating from any public high school in a state automatic admission to a public university in that state. Sometimes, this is helpful; in schools where almost all the students are from poor families, the top ten percent of the graduating class will inevitably include low-income students. A more direct strategy would be for colleges and universities to consider family background as one of several kinds of disadvantages that applicants may have faced and to include that among the criteria by which applicants are ranked.

How might employers be persuaded to use this direct approach? Half a century ago, the federal government mandated the use of affirmative action in public agencies and in firms with which it contracted. It could do the same now in order to address the nation's new opportunity gap.

In the last half century, the United States has taken long strides toward equalizing economic opportunity. That progress did not happen on its own; it took place with a push from the government. In recent decades, however, the opportunity gap for Americans from different family backgrounds has started to grow. Fortunately, the United States' experience and that of other affluent nations suggest that the country is not helpless in the face of economic and social changes. There is no silver bullet; a genuine solution is likely to include an array of shifts in policy and society. Even so, a fix is not beyond the United States' reach.

The Future of Special Operations

Beyond Kill and Capture

Linda Robinson

Over the past decade, the United States' military and the country's national security strategy have come to rely on special operations to an unprecedented degree. As identifying and neutralizing terrorists and insurgents has become one of the Pentagon's most crucial tasks, special operations forces have honed their ability to conduct manhunts, adopting a new targeting system known as "find, fix, finish, exploit, analyze, and disseminate." They have adopted a flatter organizational structure and collaborated more closely with intelligence agencies, allowing special operations to move at "the speed of war," in the words of the retired army general Stanley McChrystal, the chief architect of the contemporary U.S. approach to counterterrorism.

Implementing McChrystal's vision has been costly. Spending on sophisticated communications, stealth helicopters, and intelligence technology; building several high-tech special operations headquarters; and transforming a C-130 cargo plane into a state-of-the-art flying hospital have consumed a large (and classified) portion of the total special operations budget, which has increased from $2.3 billion in 2001 to $10.5 billion in 2012. The investment has paid clear dividends, however, most dramatically in May 2011, when U.S. Navy SEALs, operating in coordination with the CIA, raided a compound in Pakistan and killed Osama bin Laden.

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The target and location of that raid made it exceptional. But similar operations, which in earlier eras would have been considered extraordinary, have become commonplace: during the height of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, U.S. special operations units sometimes conducted as many as 14 raids a night, with each successive raid made possible by intelligence scooped up during the previous one and then rapidly processed. When decision-makers deem raids too risky or politically untenable, they sometimes opt for strikes by armed drones, another form of what special operators refer to as "the direct approach." (The CIA conducts the majority of drone strikes, but special operations forces are also authorized to employ them in specific cases, including on the battlefields of Afghanistan.)

Dramatic raids and high-tech drone strikes make for exciting headlines, so the media naturally focus on them. But this attention, along with policymakers' reliance on raids and drones, has encouraged a misperception of such actions as quick, easy solutions that allow Washington to avoid prolonged, messy wars. In fact, raids and drone strikes are tactics that are rarely decisive and often incur significant political and diplomatic costs for the United States. Although raids and drone strikes are necessary to disrupt dire and imminent threats to the United States, special operations leaders readily admit that they should not be the central pillar of U.S. military strategy.

Instead, special operations commanders say the direct approach must be coupled with "the indirect approach," a cryptic term used to describe working with and through non-U.S. partners to accomplish security objectives, often in unorthodox ways. Special operations forces forge relationships that can last for decades with a diverse collection of groups: training, advising, and operating alongside other countries' militaries, police forces, tribes, militias, or other informal groups. They also conduct civil-affairs operations that provide medical, veterinary, or agricultural assistance to civilians, improving the standing of local governments and gaining access to and a greater understanding of local conditions and populations.

It is time for special operations forces to prioritize indirect operations. That approach—also called "special warfare," the preferred term of its advocates in the U.S. Army—offers the prospect of

lasting benefits with a smaller footprint and lower cost than the hugely expensive wars of the last decade. The indirect approach is not without its pitfalls, and the special operations community will need to reconfigure itself to execute it more skillfully. But it holds great potential for advancing security objectives, especially in a time of fiscal austerity.

DIRECT VERSUS INDIRECT

In testimony delivered to the U.S. Congress last March, Admiral William McRaven, head of the U.S. Special Operations Command, said that "the direct approach alone is not the solution to the challenges our nation faces today as it ultimately only buys time and space for the indirect approach," arguing that "in the end, it will be such continuous indirect operations that will prove decisive in the global security arena."

Yet despite such high-level rhetorical support for the indirect approach, when it comes to funding and staffing, the special operations community and two presidential administrations have prioritized the direct approach for the past decade. The resulting unilateral actions have sometimes disrupted imminent threats. But their positive effects have rarely proved permanent, and they have often complicated longer-term efforts.

These are never easy calls, to be sure, as illustrated by the case of Pakistan, where bin Laden and much of the al Qaeda network hid for the past decade and where the United States has opted for a heavy application of the direct approach. In the aftermath of Operation Neptune Spear, the raid that killed bin Laden, the Pakistani public's anger at the raid, along with the embarrassment of Pakistani officials over the violation of the country's sovereignty, plunged the already tense U.S.-Pakistani relationship into crisis—with a specific cost to U.S. special operations forces. Among several retaliatory actions, Pakistan aborted a carefully cultivated, multifaceted American presence in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, both of which are dominated by Pashtuns and where U.S. special operations forces were distributing wheat seeds to civilians while also training, advising, and equipping the paramilitary Pakistani Frontier Corps and Pakistani special forces. Pakistan also

SCOTT NELSON / GETTY IMAGES

Sun's out, guns out: a U.S. special operator in Afghanistan, August 2002

terminated a U.S. special operations advisory mission with the Pakistani navy along the strategically important Makran coast in the restive province of Baluchistan, which borders Iran.

Unilateral strikes, mostly in the form of night raids, have also caused significant problems in Afghanistan, where they have enraged civilians and Afghan officials, including President Hamid Karzai, who has complained loudly about the tactic. After ten years of strife between the putative allies over this issue, the United States agreed last year to Afghanistan's demand that all raids must be authorized by the Afghan government and conducted jointly with Afghan forces. The long-term solution for most of Afghanistan's problems is for the Afghan government to provide reliable security for its own civilians, and in fact, the majority of U.S. special operations forces in Afghanistan have been working toward that goal. U.S. special operators have built an Afghan special operations command consisting of 11,000 Afghan commandos and special forces, and they are now adding a mobile ground strike force and an airborne unit. U.S. and NATO special operators are also training and advising emergency-

response police units in Kabul and around the country. And the largest contingent of U.S. special operators is spread out in 52 districts across the country, conducting stability operations and training villagers to serve in local police forces comprised of more than 16,000 police officers who report to the Afghan Ministry of the Interior.

Of course, like the direct approach, indirect operations also pose risks, as demonstrated by a recent rash of "insider attacks" on U.S. personnel, some portion of which were carried out by Taliban operatives or sympathizers who had infiltrated the Afghan security forces. Although special operators have not been disproportionately targeted in such attacks, in September, the commander of U.S. special operations in Afghanistan suspended his forces' training of Afghan recruits so that the Afghans could be vetted again for any potential security risks. Such caution reflects the high premium on mutual confidence required by the fact that special operators live and work in close quarters with their Afghan partners and plan to stay in Afghanistan after the rest of U.S. forces are withdrawn in 2014.

TWO SUCCESS STORIES

The long-term relationships fostered by the indirect approach are conduits for understanding and influence. They are the basis for partnerships through which the United States can help other countries solve their own problems and contribute to increased security in their regions. In some cases, the partnerships grow into alliances, as other countries become willing to assist the United States in security missions elsewhere. But such results come only after years of hard work, and success is often partial. Other countries' interests rarely coincide entirely with those of the United States. Moreover, by definition, these are troubled countries, under threat, with flawed governments and often incompetent or abusive security forces. Still, the partnership option frequently represents the only realistic course for U.S. security policy between doing nothing and a unilateral military intervention.

Two of the most successful recent U.S. special operations partnerships took place in Colombia and the Philippines. In both cases, over the course of a decade, and with relatively modest investments,

a few hundred U.S. special operators were able to strengthen those countries' security forces and dramatically reduce threats from insurgents, terrorists, criminals, and armed separatists and thus stabilize regions important to U.S. interests.

Owing in large part to assistance from U.S. special operations forces included in the Plan Colombia policy that U.S. President Bill Clinton launched in 1998, Colombia's military and police have all but vanquished the narcoguerrillas of the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), who once controlled large segments of territory in the country's jungles. For years, the United States had focused narrowly on Colombia's ballooning drug trade even as the country was increasingly besieged by a growing insurgency and a governance crisis. Under the $7.5 billion Plan Colombia, the U.S. State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development worked in conjunction with a security assistance program in which U.S. special operations forces helped build and train a large and capable Colombian special operations command and a highly proficient special police unit.

Raids and drone strikes are rarely decisive and often incur significant political and diplomatic costs.

In 2008, after a prolonged manhunt across the country's southern wilderness, Colombian commandos rescued three American contractors who were being held hostage by FARC guerrillas. U.S. technology and training helped, but it was the Colombians who devised and carried out an elaborate deception operation that rescued the hostages. The achievement served as a very public demonstration that Colombia's special operators were ready for prime time.

Today, Colombia is a dramatically different place: violence is down, cocaine production has declined by 72 percent since 2001, and the guerrillas have forsworn kidnapping, released their prisoners, and begun peace talks with the government. Although right-wing paramilitary groups still wield influence in some parts of the country, most have demobilized. And although Colombia's military does occasionally commit human rights abuses, it is on the whole a much more professional organization than it was prior

to receiving the U.S. training. And as drug violence and organized crime wash over Central America, Colombia's security forces are helping train police units in every Central American country (except Nicaragua) and helicopter pilots in Mexico. Colombian special operators act as valuable force multipliers since they speak the language and understand the culture of these places in ways that U.S. forces might not. These Colombians are part of an expanding network of U.S.-trained special operators that also includes forces from Middle Eastern and eastern European countries and whose members are now participating in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere alongside traditional U.S. partners from western Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

In forging relationships, U.S. special operators must not become accomplices to abusive practices or policies.

Beginning in 2001, meanwhile, U.S. special operations forces began training and sharing intelligence with Philippine military units combating jihadist militants in the country's south. After conducting an extensive assessment of the local conditions and actors, U.S. special operations units reached out to the neglected Muslim population in the Sulu Archipelago, offering health care and building wells and roads. They also conducted training exercises to build relationships with the most trustworthy Philippine units, which took the lead in combat missions. Sensitivities over Philippine sovereignty prevented U.S. special operators from taking any combat role, but they were permitted to supply intelligence, advice, and logistical support.

One of the most significant successes of the U.S.-Philippine partnership was the 2002 rescue of a group of hostages, including an American missionary, who had been kidnapped a year earlier by members of Abu Sayyaf, a Philippine-based jihadist organization affiliated with al Qaeda. According to one of the U.S. commanders involved in the mission, a U.S. special operator came up with an ingenious scheme that relied on Philippine human intelligence sources and American technology to discover the Abu Sayyaf hideout where the hostages were being held. A man suspected of acting as a courier for the militants was followed through a market in the city of Zamboanga and persuaded to add a hot chicken to a shipment that the U.S. and

Philippine forces believed the courier planned to immediately deliver to the hideout. Thermal sensors aboard an unarmed U.S. drone flying overhead tracked the shipment's heat signature as the courier headed north to a dock and loaded the shipment onto a boat. Surveillance conducted from the drone followed the boat's movements until it unloaded at a location that the U.S. operators correctly surmised was the hideout. In a subsequent operation, Philippine troops rescued the hostages, although two were killed.

One of the kidnappers, the Abu Sayyaf leader known as Abu Sabaya, managed to escape in a boat. The Philippine units, backed up by two boats full of U.S. Navy SEALs and guided by the drone, pursued Abu Sabaya and killed him in an attack on his boat. Had U.S. personnel killed Abu Sabaya, it might well have sparked anti-American protests among Filipinos, many of whom still resent the American occupation of their country a century ago. Since Filipinos killed him instead, there was no backlash. Indeed, a key to the overall success of the decadelong partnership is that U.S. special operators scrupulously observed Philippine sovereignty and the rules of engagement that banned any U.S. combat role. "We established a relationship of trust and made it succeed," said the now-retired air force commander Lieutenant General Donald Wurster, who led the special operations task force in the Philippines at the time of the rescue operation. Wurster readily concedes that the Philippines still struggles with religious and ethnic separatism, insurgencies, and corruption, but he claims definitive success in a more focused objective: "There is no al Qaeda nexus. We eliminated that."

The future of U.S. special operations depends to a large extent on Admiral William McRaven.

The U.S.-Philippine partnership may lead to further security cooperation between the two countries. During a visit to Manila by U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta this past summer, the Philippine government expressed interest in expanding security ties as the United States shifts its attention to Asia—a remarkable turnaround considering that just 20 years ago, the United States vacated two large military bases in the Philippines in response to anti-American protests.

Linda Robinson

TO ASSIST OR NOT TO ASSIST?

Navigating the failings of partner governments, as well as civil strife and complex sectarian, ideological, or tribal conflicts, is extraordinarily difficult, and given the high risk of blowback, the United States must constantly assess whether special operations partnerships with non-U.S. forces are, on balance, advancing or compromising U.S. interests. In forging relationships, U.S. special operators must not become accomplices to abusive practices or policies. Early in the war in Afghanistan, special operations forces partnered with a number of Afghan warlords with reputations for brutality. These alliances of convenience were arguably justified by the pressing need to topple the Taliban and uproot al Qaeda. But this path can become a slippery slope, and some special operators now acknowledge that the relationships they forged with some warlords were ultimately counterproductive.

The case of Yemen is also instructive in this regard. Although the headlines about Yemen have predictably been dominated by U.S. drone strikes aimed at leaders of the Yemen-based al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, since 2005, U.S. special operators have also been training, advising, and assisting the Yemeni presidential guard and special units within the Interior Ministry and the Republican Guard. These forces were once all led by relatives of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the country's longtime strongman, who violently repressed dissidence throughout his three-decade-long reign and clung to power during the Arab Spring revolt against him. Saleh finally relinquished his position in February—but he handed off power to his vice president, and two of the units training with U.S. forces remain under the command of Saleh's relatives.

Familial, tribal, sectarian, and secessionist rifts make Yemen a treacherous place, one where the United States risks being tainted by the bad acts of its partners. In such situations, congressional oversight, independent evaluations, and restrictions such as the so-called Leahy amendment, which prohibits U.S. training of or assistance to any foreign security unit found to be violating human rights, are all useful forms of leverage. Conditionality is a stick to match the carrot of aid, and sometimes the right answer is to wield the stick. As part

of the pressure campaign to oust Saleh, Washington suspended U.S. advisory assistance to Yemen for a time. But because al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula has directly targeted the United States, has continued to grow, and has formed links to groups in Somalia, just across the Gulf of Aden from Yemen, the case for more assistance has won out. Although reform measures are still being pushed on Saleh's successor, it is not clear that the United States has figured out the right mix of cooperation and pressure. Nonetheless, ignoring a strategically important country such as Yemen would probably be even more risky than is engaging with it.

ORGANIZING FOR THE LONG TERM

For partnerships in Afghanistan, Yemen, and elsewhere to produce positive results over the long term, four significant changes are required in how special operations campaigns are conceived, funded, and executed. These changes will allow special operators to deploy in an integrated fashion with other elements of the U.S. government, including conventional military forces, in well-thought-out campaigns that will last not days but years and achieve durable positive effects.

First, the special operations community needs to create templates for standard procedures based on its successes in Colombia and the Philippines. Military leaders also need to communicate clearly the lessons of those experiences to others in the U.S. government who will ultimately decide on and assist in the execution of any new plans.

Second, Congress and the Pentagon need to end the practice of funding special operations in a piecemeal fashion. Currently, special operations are funded by numerous different authorities, with budgets that expire each year. Much of the funding—for example, money that comes from defense-authorization bills—is restricted to certain purposes or types of forces, which makes it difficult to plan and conduct comprehensive campaigns. For broader stabilization missions, other funding sources can be tapped, but they often require State Department approval, which can take up to two years to obtain. Special operations forces need a faster and more straightforward budgetary process. State Department oversight is crucial,

but it currently moves far too slowly, owing to the U.S. government's complex procedures for approving foreign assistance.

Third, the military must improve the way it plans and coordinates with other government agencies for long-term special operations campaigns. Currently, these responsibilities fall to theater special operations commands (TSOCs), which are supposed to lead special operations in a given regional theater and to advise the regional combatant commander (also known as the geographic combatant commander), who is in charge of all U.S. military forces in that area. But unlike the well-equipped headquarters built to oversee special operations manhunts, TSOCs are thinly resourced and poorly staffed. "Tsoc staffs are where special operators' careers go to die," one senior special operations officer told me. But ensuring that regional combatant commanders understand special operations forces and how to use them for maximum lasting impact is a crucial job. So rather than being regarded as backwaters, the TSOCs should attract the best talent and become central nodes for regional expertise.

Finally, the special operations community must make a more concerted effort to enlist the support of interagency country teams in U.S. embassies around the world and of Washington-based national security agencies. Diplomatic, development, and law enforcement agencies often play critical roles in special operations missions; the U.S. ambassadors in Colombia and the Philippines, for example, proved to be strong advocates of the value of special operations. But due to a lack of outreach to those agencies on the part of the special operations leadership, that is still the exception rather than the rule.

NEW LEADERSHIP

THE LIKELIHOOD that the U.S. military will take these crucial steps depends to a large extent on one man: Admiral William McRaven, the current commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM). McRaven took the helm at SOCOM's Tampa headquarters in the summer of 2011, fresh from overseeing the celebrated raid that killed bin Laden. McRaven, who had led the special operations unit in charge of manhunts from 2008 to 2011, was riding a crest of enormous credibility inside the Obama administration, which he had

earned by his careful planning and unflappable leadership. He put his considerable credibility behind a number of proposals for reform. The ideas were bold, but if implemented, their net effect would be to concentrate power within SOCOM. As a result, McRaven's plans were not popular in other parts of the military.

McRaven's package of proposals ignited a fierce debate inside the Pentagon and the regional commands, as some officials feared that his plans would diminish or eliminate their voices and votes when it came to the use of special operations. One source of controversy was McRaven's proposal that the TSOCs be assigned to SOCOM instead of to the regional commands, a step that would effectively give McRaven command authority over the TSOCs. McRaven assured the regional combatant commanders that they would retain operational control over missions. Some remained unconvinced, however.

McRaven also proposed broadening SOCOM's operational purview by giving it a global responsibility and the authority to move forces around worldwide, so long as the regional combatant commands concurred. (If they did not, the matter would go to the Pentagon for adjudication.) Such changes would push SOCOM into a far larger operational role than it has traditionally played; indeed, the law that establishes SOCOM's responsibilities makes clear that the command will have an operational role only when directed to assume one by the president or the secretary of defense.

In introducing these proposals, McRaven was reviving the argument—made frequently but unsuccessfully ever since the 9/11 attacks—that a single entity needs to be solely responsible for prosecuting special operations against threats that crisscross the boundaries of the regional commands. Turning SOCOM into a global combatant command, however, would create constant friction with the regional commands. And in fact, it soon became apparent that McRaven had overestimated his clout and that important constituencies interpreted his proposals as a power grab.

But this past spring and summer, McRaven traveled repeatedly to the regional combatant commands and to Washington to hammer out a tentative compromise. According to officials involved in those negotiations, they agreed to a decision memorandum that guarantees that operational control of the TSOCs will remain with the regional

combatant commanders, as McRaven had pledged. McRaven agreed to a modified version of his initial proposal to make SOCOM a global combatant command; instead, it will be designated a "functional command with global responsibilities." But it remains unclear whether McRaven will secure for SOCOM the ability to deploy forces globally.

In McRaven's defense, SOCOM should have a voice in how and where special operations forces are employed. But the more urgent reforms are the ones that foster greater integration, not greater stovepiping, both within the U.S. military and between the military and its civilian counterparts. His initial missteps notwithstanding, McRaven has begun to reorient the Tampa headquarters to provide more support to the TSOCs and for the indirect approach. He plans to reinforce the TSOCs by assigning more than 300 of his own SOCOM staffers to them. McRaven seems to understand the importance of the TSOCs from firsthand experience: he himself led a TSOC in Europe from 2006 to 2008.

In May, in his first press conference since taking command of SOCOM, McRaven explained that his proposed changes were intended to provide the regional commanders with "the best special operations capability we can." But, he added, those commanders are "generally focused on their region—not solely, but generally focused on their region."

It remains to be seen whether McRaven's peers within the military will believe that the SOCOM commander is trying to help them rather than trying to expand his own authority. Creating a culture of collaboration within the U.S. military, which is an inherently hierarchical institution, is a difficult task. McRaven appears to recognize this. According to an officer on his staff, McRaven gave his staff a reading list when he arrived in Tampa, and the first title on it was a book by the management guru Stephen Covey, *The Speed of Trust*—trust being what McRaven seems to think is necessary in order to go beyond McChrystal's "speed of war" and so allow special operations to realize their full potential.

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Review Essay

God's Politics

The Lessons of the Hebrew Bible

Jonathan Sacks

In God's Shadow: Politics in the Hebrew Bible. BY MICHAEL WALZER. Yale University Press, 2012, 256 pp. $28.00.

With its commandments and parables, its kings and its prophets, the Hebrew Bible has served as a reference point for Western politics for centuries. Almost every kind of political movement, it seems, has drawn its own message from the text. For the contemporary left, it inspires calls for social justice and the redistribution of wealth. The right, meanwhile, uses it to preach adherence to traditional social values and family structures. But what does the Hebrew Bible actually have to say about politics? Is there a consistent set of political principles to be found in it? *In God's Shadow*, a recent book by the philosopher Michael Walzer, attempts to tackle these questions. As Walzer observes, there's a good reason why so many opposing movements claim the Hebrew Bible as their own: the book's stories, messages, and political arrangements are simply too diverse to fit under any unified theory of government. In fact, they give credence to many.

AN ALMOST DEMOCRACY

Walzer is one of the great thinkers of our time, a scholar who rescued political philosophy from a period of arid linguistic abstraction and gave it back its thick texture, historical specificity, and intellectual drama. Over a long and distinguished career, he has proved immune to the siren song of reductive theory, the search for what the British philosopher John Stuart Mill called "one very simple principle" to solve complex problems. His main argument, developed in the books *Spheres of Justice* and *Thick and Thin*, has been that universal principles, whether in politics or ethics, have limited traction. The essence of political theory lies in the details, and the details are always local: set in a

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particular time, place, and culture. He insists, however, that this is not an argument for relativism. Every actual social order can be scrutinized and judged. But for the criticism to have force, it should emanate from within the society it criticizes. Moral argument may not always begin at home, but home is where it usually belongs.

Throughout his intellectual career, Walzer has also been fascinated by the role of religion in political thought, specifically how the Hebrew Bible has influenced political movements. So it is with great anticipation that his followers will turn to *In God's Shadow*, and they will not be disappointed. Although brief, it covers the whole arena of politics in the Bible. Walzer addresses the covenant between God and the Israelites and its renewals, the legal codes, and the biblical ethics of war. He examines the complex story of the monarchy in biblical Israel and the political outlooks of the prophets, priests, and "intellectuals"—Walzer's term for the authors of what is referred to as wisdom literature, which includes the virtue-oriented books of Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes. He illustrates how the exile of the Jews from their homeland revolutionized the structures and sensibilities of what was ceasing to be the political nation of Israel and becoming the religious community of Judaism.

Walzer documents the sheer diversity—he calls it "pluralism"—of the Hebrew Bible's approach to politics, in two different senses. First, the text contains a multiplicity of voices, each with its own tonality, concerns, and characteristic way of seeing the world. The priests focused mostly on holiness, the prophets on justice and compassion, and the royal courtiers on practical wisdom. The canonization of the Hebrew Bible preserved intact these distinctive perspectives and personalities.

Second, and no less significant, Walzer records a series of unresolved tensions about almost all the ideas and institutions that appear in the pages of the Hebrew Bible. So, for instance, there are two covenants, that of Abraham and that of Moses, one emphasizing the bonds of kinship, the other, the voluntary acceptance of obligations ("descent" versus "consent," as Walzer neatly puts it). There are three legal codes, one in Exodus, another in Leviticus, a third in Deuteronomy. The Hebrew Bible also puts forward two radically incompatible accounts of the role of monarchy. One view, focused especially on King David, sees it as a divinely ordained covenant, whereas the other view, found in the book of Samuel, regards it as a rejection of God's rule. Then, there are two perspectives on the priesthood: a hierarchical one that sees the priests as an elite and a more universal aspiration that speaks of Israel as "a kingdom of priests" in which all the people are summoned to holiness.

Reading Walzer's account, one is reminded of Ralph Waldo Emerson's remark that "a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds"; by Walzer's lights, this adage applies to holy books as well. More precisely, *In God's Shadow* suggests that the Hebrew Bible is deliberately structured not as a consistent system of thought but as a field of tensions.

In highlighting all these incongruities, Walzer contends that although the Hebrew Bible is full of political incident, it contains no political theory, no account of an ideal regime (such as one finds in Greek philosophy), no appreciation of politics

as a way of life, and no belief that any political leader could, on his own, shape the destiny of his people. The Bible has religious and moral teachings but not political ones.

The prophets had a domestic but not a foreign policy—passionately concerned with justice at home, they believed that the fate of the nation was in the hands of God. The entire prophetic message insofar as wars and alliances were concerned could be summed up in two words: Do nothing. As Moses tells the Israelites at the Red Sea, in Exodus 14, "The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." The prophet Jeremiah evinces a similar view when he advises the Israelites to accept the Babylonian conquest. Nothing the Jews could do would alter the fact that they were about to be punished by defeat. God was moving the pieces on the chessboard of history, and belief in their own power would lead the Judeans to disaster. In the biblical world, so long and deep is the shadow God casts over the affairs of humankind that there is little space left for politics as normally conceived.

That said, Walzer concludes by suggesting that in three ways the political system of the Israelites in the Hebrew Bible represents an "almost-democracy." First, the covenant between God and mankind involved everyone, including "socially subordinate and politically powerless groups." Second, the king had no legislative power. It was God, not a human ruler, who made the laws, and even kings were subject to them. Politics was only a matter of interpreting the laws, and the task of interpretation was widely diffused throughout society. Third, the Israelites enjoyed a degree of freedom of dissent, evidenced by the prophets who spoke in a popular manner in the public domain (Walzer calls them "the first social critics in the recorded history of the West"). In the biblical world, prophecy was born simultaneously with monarchy; the critique of power appears at the same time as power itself.

So it was an "almost-democracy"—but not democracy or any other form of politics, either. "There can't be fully sovereign states, or a worked-out theory of popular (or any other) sovereignty, so long as God is an active sovereign," writes Walzer. "The people consent, but they do not rule. Only when God is conceived to withdraw, to stand at some distance from the world of nations, to give up his political interventions, is there room for human politics."

SOFT POWER

Walzer is undeniably right that in one sense, God's omnipotence in the biblical world precludes ordinary human politics. His argument bears structural similarities to those of the Jewish philosopher Yeshayahu Leibowitz on ethics and the Jewish historian Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi on history. Leibowitz argued that the Hebrew Bible contains no ethics, since ethics yields propositions such as "Love thy neighbor as thyself," whereas the Bible yields sentences such as "Love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the Lord." To act morally is to make choices—that is, to act autonomously—and since the Bible contains only divine commands, it precludes moral behavior. Likewise, Yerushalmi argued that although the Bible seems to contain a great deal of history, its stories must be read as memory, since history involves the kind of detachment that cannot exist in a sacred text. And

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so it makes sense that biblical Hebrew contains no abstract terms for politics, ethics, or history, despite the Bible's seeming interest in all three.

Yet even so, the Hebrew Bible has had an enormous influence on modern political thought, as Walzer himself has chronicled. His first significant work, *The Revolution of the Saints*, focused on the Bible-based radicalism of the Calvinists and the Puritans, and his *Exodus and Revolution* chronicled the role that the Exodus story has played in the history of liberation movements. Even the radical Thomas Paine invoked the Hebrew Bible in his 1776 tract, *Common Sense*. Meanwhile, leading politicians and think tanks continue to be interested in what the Hebrew Bible has to say. All of this suggests that despite the Hebrew Bible's inadequacy in addressing worldly political questions of sovereignty and authority, it is still seen by many as a useful guide to modern politics.

One reason for this is that the Hebrew Bible has a lot to say about the limits of power. Politics in the narrow sense is concerned with the use, abuse, and justification of power by governments. The Hebrew Bible, in several of its many voices, puts forward a sustained critique of power when used by humans against one another, individually or collectively. Cain kills. Pharaoh enslaves. Even King David abuses his power, sending the husband of his mistress to die in battle. When a prophet uses power to prove his point, as when Elijah orders the death of the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel after demonstrating God's potency, the text implicitly criticizes him. God shows Elijah that he is not to be found in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire but in a "still small voice." In this sense, Nietzsche was correct to identify the Hebrew Bible, and Judaism more generally, as the prime enemy of the will to power.

Not only does the Hebrew Bible criticize power, but it also looks down on power's natural home, the city. The first founder of a city, Cain, is also the first murderer. Particularly in the book of Genesis, cities are portrayed as places of hubris, as in Babel; of hostility to strangers, as in Sodom; and of sexual excess, as in the Egyptian city where Joseph was held captive. The Bible prefers the simple relationships of families and communities to the indulgences of city life, where money talks and power rules.

Moreover, the Hebrew Bible invokes the sovereignty of God not to justify human power—through the divine right of kings, for example—but to criticize it, diminish it, and, in a sense, secularize it. The biblical writers were relatively indifferent to political structures, believing that the collective acceptance of the covenant by the Jews committed them to self-government in accordance with God's law. Many of the biblical writers were suspicious of centralized power. Some were hostile to hierarchy. They recorded the moral failures of their greatest kings. And they were the first to acknowledge that Israel was a small country surrounded by empires with superior militaries. (As a fighting force, the Israelites were no more distinguished than the Moabites, the Amorites, the Edomites, or many other minor nations of which little trace remains.) Given the political situation of Jeremiah's time, his plea for the Jews to do nothing to fight the Babylonian conquest reads less like an otherworldly reliance on divine intervention than a

politically pragmatic stance. When a small country faces a large and powerful empire, accommodation may be its most sensible option.

SOCIAL STUDIES

The Hebrew Bible is not only a critique of power but also a treatise on where politics belongs in the scheme of human undertakings. It recognizes that there is life—not just private but shared life—outside politics. From quite early on in their history, the Israelites seem to have sensed that they had encountered certain truths that would one day resonate far beyond their borders, and those truths, if not political, were not narrowly spiritual either. They concerned welfare, employer-employee relationships, debt and debt relief, environmental matters, and so on. They concerned society rather than the state.

As I once suggested in *The Politics of Hope*, what makes the Hebrew Bible unique in the history of political thought is its dual account of the founding of the Israelite nation. The first narrative, illustrating the birth of Israel as a "holy nation," comes in Exodus 19–20, when the Israelites accept the Ten Commandments from God at Mount Sinai. The second, the birth of Israel as a worldly kingdom, appears in the first book of Samuel with the anointing of Saul as king. The former was a covenant that created a society; the latter was a social contract that created a state. This duality meant that the Jews were able to survive as a society even without formal political institutions. Because the laws preceded the kingdom, they remained in force even when the Jews lost their land and became an exiled people.

The Israelites of the Hebrew Bible never quite figured out how best to arrange human political affairs. Many of them believed they needed no other sovereign than God, but they also knew that without a worldly ruler, anarchy would reign. And so the Hebrew Bible is not the best text on government and the relationship between power and the will of the people. That subject was the province of Athens, not Jerusalem. But given that Jewish society has persisted and thrived for millennia, the text remains compelling on a number of questions: How do civilizations survive? How do they retain the moral energies that first brought them to greatness? How do they protect themselves against the otherwise universal rule that principalities and powers must decline and fall?

For those who care about the future of the West, the Hebrew Bible still has much to say, if not about political structures then about civil society and nonpolitical virtues. That much, as Walzer notes, God leaves to us: "The world is God's stage. . . . But domestic society belongs, for a time at least, to humankind." And for the task of building a just and successful society, the Hebrew Bible will continue to be an essential guide.

Review Essay

What Really Happened in Vietnam

The North, the South, and the American Defeat

Fredrik Logevall

Hanoi's War: An International History of the War for Peace in Vietnam. BY LIEN-HANG T. NGUYEN. University of North Carolina Press, 2012, 464 pp. $34.95.

This past Memorial Day, U.S. President Barack Obama marked the 50th anniversary of the start of the Vietnam War with a speech at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. "Even now, historians cannot agree on precisely when the war began," he said. "But if any year . . . illustrated the changing nature of our involvement, it was 1962." It's a debatable choice. The United States was already deeply involved in combating the Communist-led insurgency in South Vietnam in the late 1950s and before that had supplied and bankrolled France's losing effort against Ho Chi Minh's revolutionary forces. Historians usually date the start of the Second Indochina War—what the Vietnamese refer to as "the American War"—to 1959 or 1960.

Still, there is no question that Washington's military commitment deepened appreciably in 1962, as vast quantities of U.S. weapons, jet fighters, helicopters, and armored personnel carriers arrived in South Vietnam, along with thousands of additional military advisers. That year, the Pentagon set up a full field command called the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), and put a three-star general, Paul Harkins, in charge.

Journalists on the scene understood what was happening. "The United States is involved in a war in Vietnam," began a front-page *New York Times* article in February by the venerable military correspondent Homer Bigart, who noted Washington's "passionate and inflexible" support for South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem and speculated that the United States "seems inextricably committed to a long, inconclusive war."

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He quoted U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy, who on a visit to Saigon that month vowed that his country would stand by Diem "until we win."

Victory never came. Despite the more than half a million U.S. soldiers President Lyndon Johnson sent to Vietnam, and the more than eight million tons of bombs the U.S. Air Force dropped on Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia from 1962 to 1973, Washington could not achieve its core objective: to preserve an independent, noncommunist South Vietnam for the indefinite future. In January 1973, U.S. and North Vietnamese negotiators signed a cease-fire agreement in Paris; two months later, the last U.S. ground troops left South Vietnam. Both the North and the South soon violated the cease-fire, and large-scale war resumed. On April 29, 1975, the South Vietnamese government collapsed, and Vietnam was reunified under a communist government based in Hanoi. By the time the fighting stopped, it had claimed the lives of three to four million Vietnamese, hundreds of thousands of Cambodians and Laotians, and more than 58,000 Americans. Now, *Hanoi's War*, a pathbreaking new book by the historian Lien-Hang Nguyen, illuminates the decision-making behind the North's relentless resistance, helping readers better understand why the struggle lasted as long as it did and why all those people died.

THE RECKONING

For the past four-plus decades, scholars, journalists, and memoirists have tried to explain this bloody Second Indochina War: its origins, its escalation, its long duration, and its denouement. U.S.-centered accounts written by American authors have dominated the literature. Long before U.S. archives were opened, these histories reached a broad, orthodox view of the reasons for defeat, agreeing on several key points: that U.S. involvement was the product of ignorance about Vietnam and misplaced faith in the efficacy of U.S. military power, that the successive South Vietnamese governments after 1954 were authoritarian and unpopular, and that Washington therefore made the disastrous mistake of intervening in a civil war among Vietnamese in which the other side had the mantle of nationalist legitimacy. Although U.S. forces fought well, the war was ultimately unwinnable for the simple reason that no military solution could ever be had. The war had to be won politically or not at all.

Thus, David Halberstam's hugely influential book *The Best and the Brightest*, which appeared in 1972, described how hubris and a belief that victory was inevitable pulled U.S. leaders, bit by bit, into the "quagmire" of Vietnam. And thus, Frances FitzGerald's Pulitzer Prize–winning *Fire in the Lake*, published the same year, argued that Americans foolishly blundered into another people's history, in the context of which the United States' military power was ultimately irrelevant. For Halberstam and FitzGerald, to talk of alternative U.S. strategies that might have worked was mistaken: no better option existed.

Other incisive early accounts also retain their value—those by Chester Cooper, Hans Morgenthau, Daniel Ellsberg, Paul Kattenburg, Joseph Buttinger, George Herring, and Bernard Fall, among others. The quality of these works suggests that first-cut histories, when carefully done, can stand up remarkably well over time, even

as primary sources are declassified and other historians get to work. (A prediction: the same will be true of the early studies of the Iraq war.)

Nevertheless, the massive outpouring of scholarship on the war in the past 12 to 15 years has challenged the older interpretations and rendered some of them untenable. No longer can it be seriously argued, for example, as Halberstam and the historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., claimed, that U.S. leaders stumbled blindly into a quagmire, step by step, until one day they found themselves in what none of them wanted: a land war in Asia. To the contrary, their eyes were wide open, and they mostly understood the likely ramifications of their choices.

Nor does the internal record show much evidence of hubris, at least with respect to the military prospects. From an early point, President John F. Kennedy and Johnson, along with their top aides, were somber realists on the war. Although they were hardly experts on Vietnam's history and culture, they were not the ignoramuses many in the antiwar movement made them out to be; they realized that the United States faced long odds, even with a major military escalation. Privately (and only privately), they also on occasion admitted the impermissible: that the outcome in Vietnam might not matter all that much to U.S. and Western security.

The United States had made a commitment to South Vietnam, however, and Kennedy and Johnson saw no option but to maintain it. They found what their predecessors in the White House, as well as a long line of leaders in France, had found, and what President Richard Nixon would discover after them: that in Vietnam, the path of least immediate resistance, especially in domestic political terms, was to stand firm in the hope that somehow things would turn out fine—or at least, as in some high-stakes version of the game old maid, be handed off to the next in line.

REVISING HISTORY

New works have challenged the old orthodoxy on other points, as well. The question of which among the competing Vietnamese leaders actually had popular legitimacy—one of the most slippery concepts in political science—has gotten harder to answer in recent years, as scholars have reexamined the government of South Vietnam, especially under Diem, who took power in 1954. Diem, it is now clear, was an intelligent patriot who possessed a detailed vision for his country's future. Some revisionist authors have extended this line of argument, alleging that the legitimacy of Diem as a Vietnamese leader matched or even exceeded Ho's and that he was well on the way to victory against the insurgency when he was deposed and killed in a U.S.-sanctioned coup in November 1963.

That claim goes too far. Over time, Diem's defects as a leader—his obduracy, his political myopia, his easy resort to repression—became increasingly obvious to the Vietnamese people. American officials were fully cognizant of these limitations but could find no one better, and so they stuck with him, their influence sagging with each passing year despite the regime's complete dependence on U.S. aid. By most measures, Diem's government was losing the war when he was overthrown, which is precisely why U.S. officials threw their support behind the coup.

With respect to the later phase of the war, it is now clear that things went better for U.S. and South Vietnamese forces after the Communists' Tet offensive, in 1968, than earlier histories suggested. Vietcong forces were decimated in the fighting, and in the months thereafter, General Creighton Abrams' "clear and hold" strategy of controlling patches of territory and defending their inhabitants (a change from the "search and destroy" strategy used by Abrams' predecessor at MACV, General William Westmoreland) made indisputable progress.

But it remains unclear how lasting this success was; detailed, archives-based scholarly works on the war in the South during this period are only starting to emerge. Still, the existing evidence offers little reason to think that victory was within reach. For one thing, notwithstanding the heavy Vietcong losses during Tet, the Communists maintained the ability to carry out nationwide attacks, and indeed, for most of 1969, South Vietnam was plagued by so-called mini-Tets. Although these attacks never threatened to topple the Saigon regime, they indicated that the Vietcong was still a force to be reckoned with. Hanoi largely recovered from the Tet offensive by replacing southern forces with northerners, and men and supplies from the North continued to infiltrate the South.

Few senior U.S. officials at the time believed the military situation had swung unequivocally and permanently in their favor, much less that victory was close at hand. They understood that gains in the countryside in the aftermath of Tet were limited to certain areas and did not imply growing popular support for the Saigon government, which remained incompetent, authoritarian, and corrupt. The massive use of firepower deemed essential to clear and hold territory did not help win hearts and minds. Time and again, U.S. economic reports complained that South Vietnamese authorities were unable to collect taxes outside of a few urban areas and that the government was therefore unlikely to survive long without being propped up by Washington. The Communists, meanwhile, continued to collect taxes, replenish food supplies, and draft soldiers; in other words, they did all the things that a government controlling its territory ought to be able to do.

The North's policy in these final years is the central concern of *Hanoi's War*. Years in the making, Nguyen's book is based on a range of Vietnamese-language materials, published and archival, although not records from North Vietnam's Politburo and other high-level sources, which remain classified. It sheds much light on how leaders in North Vietnam approached the fighting and, especially, the diplomatic negotiations from the time of the Tet offensive to the signing of the cease-fire, in 1973. Without question, *Hanoi's War* stands as a major accomplishment and one of the most important scholarly works to appear on this later, and relatively understudied, phase of the struggle.

THE VIEW FROM HANOI

The principal player in Nguyen's story is Le Duan, the leading figure in the North's hierarchy in the later stages of the war yet a shadowy figure in most histories of it. A native of central Vietnam, Le Duan got his start battling the French in the years before World War II, and Nguyen traces his gradual rise within the Communist Party throughout the 1950s. What

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE / GETTY IMAGES

Northern nemesis: a Vietcong soldier taking part in the Tet offensive, 1968

emerges is a picture of a savvy and ruthless bureaucratic infighter whose worldview and strategic outlook took form in the crucible of the First Indochina War and who, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, along with his loyal ally Le Duc Tho, defeated everyone who challenged his authority.

A signal contribution of Nguyen's book is how it reaveals how sharp the internal disputes were between the hardliners, such as Le Duan and Le Duc Tho, who wanted to pursue an aggressive strategy of "total war" in the South, and the moderates, led by Ho and General Vo Nguyen Giap, who advocated a "North first" strategy of consolidating the Communist Party's control in the North and working to reunify the country without resorting to large-scale war. As the Sino-Soviet split deepened and the insurgency in South Vietnam intensified in the early 1960s, Nguyen demonstrates, the opposing factions mirrored that schism: the hardliners used Mao Zedong's anti-imperialist exhortations to further their position, whereas the moderates embraced Nikita Khrushchev's calls for "peaceful coexistence" to advance their cause.

Nguyen never explains precisely how and when Le Duan consolidated his control, no doubt because of the obvious handicap under which she operated: it's hard to make definitive judgments on internal Politburo battles without access to Politburo records. At various junctures, Nguyen is compelled to speculate that Le Duan "must have" thought this or "probably" sought to do that. She refers to Le Duan's "assumption of power in 1960," but her own evidence suggests

that it took until the middle of the decade for him to gain authority and that even then, power fluctuated between the factions and continued to do so through the end of the conflict. Ho, a strangely marginal character in the book, ceased to be a central figure in Hanoi's decision-making process in the late 1950s, but he continued for some years thereafter to serve as an éminence grise in the inner sanctum and to play a crucial diplomatic role vis-à-vis Beijing and Moscow, a point Nguyen concedes but does not develop.

One also wishes she had done more to explicate her frequent assertions that Le Duan was intent on waging "total war" and "going for broke" against South Vietnam. To the contrary, it seems clear that both factions in Hanoi always hoped to avoid total war if possible; when they stepped up their military involvement after the middle of 1959, they did so carefully, the better to avoid provoking a large-scale U.S. intervention. In April 1965, as the Americanization of the war got under way, the People's Army of Vietnam had four regiments in the South, totaling roughly 6,000 men—a sizable number, to be sure, but hardly a figure synonymous with "total war."

The book leaves no doubt, however, about Hanoi's fundamental determination to prevail. North Vietnamese leaders, whatever their disagreements about strategy and tactics, were wholly united in their commitment to reunify the country under their control, regardless of the cost. Thus, although Nguyen does not say much about U.S. and South Vietnamese decision-making in the early 1960s, her account gives little reason to believe that Washington strategists could ever have found a breaking point in Hanoi, whatever they might have tried.

Hanoi's War adds a great deal to historians' understanding of the planning and execution of the Tet offensive. Nguyen details the process by which Le Duan ordered the massive and coordinated attack on South Vietnam's cities, which was intended to deliver a knockout blow to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam and incite the populace to rise up and overthrow the Saigon-based government of Nguyen Van Thieu. She shows that Le Duan had to overcome the vehement objections of Giap, who believed the revolutionary forces were not yet ready to launch such a large-scale attack. (When Giap realized he would not get his way, he exiled himself to Hungary in protest.)

Ho, too, argued against a major assault on urban areas, as did the Chinese, who saw such a high-stakes attack as a repudiation of Mao's strategy of protracted low-level warfare. The Chinese also feared it would increase North Vietnam's dependence on Soviet aid and weaponry, thereby undermining their own influence in Hanoi. Le Duan's gambit for a decisive victory failed—no uprising occurred, and the Saigon government survived while his own forces suffered huge battlefield losses—but he maintained his grip on power. And to skeptical colleagues upset about a military defeat, Le Duan could claim an important political result: the Tet offensive tipped U.S. public opinion against the war and toppled Johnson from power.

Most historians would agree with Le Duan that the Tet offensive was a major political defeat for the United States, and in hindsight, it is hard to see how it could

have been anything else. As Nguyen shrewdly points out, however, Tet marked less of a turning point in U.S. policy than it might have, because the incoming Nixon administration reversed Johnson's efforts in 1968 to stem the escalation of U.S. involvement in the war. "Like Le Duan and Le Duc Tho," she writes, Nixon and his national security adviser, Henry Kissinger, "were confident that they could succeed where their predecessors had failed." She proceeds to detail how the two men implemented a three-pronged strategy to regain the initiative in Vietnam—militarily, diplomatically, and domestically.

AN UNWINNABLE WAR

Nguyen makes equally insightful contributions concerning North Vietnam's strategizing in 1972, illuminating the ways in which Nixon's opening to China and pursuit of détente with the Soviet Union left leaders in Hanoi feeling squeezed. These U.S. policies spurred the North Vietnamese to launch their ambitious but only partially successful Easter offensive; Hanoi made modest territorial gains but neither ousted Thieu nor altered the overall military balance of power.

Regarding the negotiations that began in 1968 and ultimately yielded the Paris peace accords in January 1973, Nguyen exhaustively elucidates the twists and turns in the North's bargaining posture. She demonstrates how the bitter memories of the 1954 Geneva Conference, which ended the First Indochina War and divided Vietnam, exerted a powerful influence on Le Duan and his colleagues. In 1954, Ho's government had bowed to pressure from Beijing and Moscow to accept a lesser deal than the military balance indicated it ought to have. In 1972, Hanoi's negotiators were determined to avoid that result and to set policy on their own. (Nguyen might have noted that their recollections were selective: in early 1954, Ho and Giap had had their own reasons for wanting a compromise. Their forces were battered and exhausted, and they also had to worry about the prospect of U.S. military intervention should the talks collapse.) The North Vietnamese were only partially successful in preserving their autonomy, as the Chinese and the Soviets again leaned on them privately to settle with Washington.

Nguyen's study also details the fascinating ways in which the fractious Sino-Soviet relationship proved alternately helpful and problematic for North Vietnam's leaders: they were adept at playing one patron off the other, but at times they were left marginalized, lacking support from either. In sketching these ties, Nguyen's study lives up to its billing as "an international history of the war for peace in Vietnam." Yet the subtitle implies a book with a broader scope than Nguyen delivers. Although the introduction promises a thorough treatment of South Vietnam and its leaders, the Saigon government emerges as a prominent actor only late in the drama. Likewise, Nguyen might have provided a fuller assessment of the government's popular standing or of the larger state-society dynamic in the South.

When telling the U.S. side of the story, Nguyen relies mostly on published sources, including the State Department's excellent Foreign Relations of the United States series and a select number of key secondary accounts. For the most part, her interpretations of Nixon and Kissinger's

policies track closely with those of previous histories.

Partly for this reason, it seems doubtful that this book will dramatically alter the ongoing debate in the United States about the war. Like the communist sources on the broader Cold War, works such as Nguyen's that are centered on the Vietnamese revolutionaries enable analysts to continue the same old arguments—about the reasons the United States got involved in Vietnam in the first place, decided to fight a large-scale war there, and ultimately failed in its effort to preserve an independent, noncommunist South Vietnam—only with a higher level of sophistication.

On that basis, it may be said that *Hanoi's War* offers limited support for revisionist analyses of the struggle, while still upholding the essence of the orthodox position. Nguyen makes it crystal clear that strategists in Hanoi made their share of misjudgments, bickered among themselves, and, like political and military leaders everywhere, acted partly on the basis of careerism and personal advantage. She leaves no doubt that the leadership faced periods of acute tension and uncertainty, notably in the aftermath of the Tet offensive, and at various points confronted serious morale problems, both in the armed forces and among the northern populace, as well as discontent among the intelligentsia.

Still, nothing in this book ultimately challenges the prevailing view that the United States and its South Vietnamese allies always faced very long odds in this war. Their adversary's ruthless commitment, unshakable tenacity, and skillful fighting were, from start to finish, remarkable—as impressive as those of any combatant in the annals of modern warfare. The Saigon government, meanwhile, was crippled from the outset by three principal shortcomings that no amount of U.S. intervention could overcome: professional military inferiority, endemic corruption, and insufficient popular support.

Indeed, Washington's involvement was part of the problem, for it presented the noncommunist nationalists in the South with an impossible dilemma: they couldn't win without the United States, and they couldn't win with it. Massive U.S. assistance was essential to defeating the insurgency yet killed any chance of gaining broad public backing. Bui Diem, a former South Vietnamese ambassador to the United States, would later write of this predicament: "Caught in the middle of these powerful forces, Vietnamese nationalists found themselves in a succession of precarious situations. In most cases they were forced to choose among unpalatable alternatives; often, indeed, they saw no choice at all. With their survival at stake they were forced to take refuge in a series of uneasy and uncomfortable compromises that little by little eroded their legitimacy."

Perhaps this explains why, when the moment of truth came, the majority of officers, soldiers, and ordinary people were unwilling to defend South Vietnam to the death. In the words of General Cao Van Vien, the last chief of staff of the South Vietnamese forces, by the end, "the whole nation appeared to resemble a rotten fruit ready to fall at the first passing breeze."

Review Essay

The Quality of Command

The Wrong Way and the Right Way to Make Better Generals

Robert H. Scales

The Generals: American Military Command From World War II to Today. BY THOMAS E. RICKS. Penguin Press, 2012, 576 pp. $32.95.

The argument of Thomas Ricks' new book, *The Generals*, is simple: since the end of World War II, the combat performance of the U.S. Army has been subpar, primarily because the highest-ranking generals have been reluctant to fire underperforming generals lower in the chain of command. The fear of being relieved of duty in wartime, Ricks contends, drives military leaders to act boldly, flexibly, and creatively. When that fear is present—as Ricks claims it was during World War II, thanks to U.S. General George Marshall's whip hand—good generals get better, and bad generals get purged. But when that fear is absent—as Ricks believes it has been over the past several decades—mediocrity prevails, with unfortunate consequences for the army and the nation.

An award-winning reporter for the *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post* who now blogs for *Foreign Policy*, Ricks has written several books, including important analyses of the early and late phases of the Iraq war. This new volume is the result of four years of effort studying American generalship. Ricks devotes a chapter each to army generals he considers failures in combat, from Douglas MacArthur in Korea to George Casey, Jr., in Iraq.

The Generals tackles a crucial subject and contains some valuable insights and suggestions. Unfortunately, its treatment of individual case studies leaves much to be desired. Most important, its basic thesis is simply wrong. Firing generals was not the key to U.S. military success in the past, nor will it be in the future. The challenge for the military is not tough love but rather figuring out how best to attract, retain, nurture, and

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groom the strategic talent it needs, from top to bottom.

FIRING IS NOT LEADERSHIP

Ricks' hero is Marshall, who, as U.S. Army chief of staff from 1939 to 1945, instituted the so-called Marshall model, a pattern of frequent and often harsh firings of general officers before and during World War II. Through these removals, together with a complementary pattern of rapid promotions for officers he deemed talented, Marshall tried to mold the senior military command in his preferred image. Ricks admires Marshall's willingness to break eggs in the process, and he argues that the reluctance of Marshall's successors to do the same has had a malign effect on the U.S. military. This analysis is incorrect, however, for several reasons.

Despite what Ricks claims, the Marshall model was not, in fact, an unquestioned success. Nostalgia for the "greatest generation" of soldiers, who won World War II, is all well and good, but an objective look at the generals Marshall picked suggests that many were less than great. Marshall made a number of mistakes, from selecting the incompetent Major General Lloyd Fredendall to command in North Africa to choosing such less than notable commanders as General Mark Clark to lead in Italy; Major General John Lucas, at Anzio; and several of the men responsible for operations after the Normandy landings.

Ricks is unclear, moreover, about just what the Marshall model is supposed to involve. At times, he celebrates the public firing of a general as a mark of leadership that raises morale and fighting efficiency. But at other times, he pulls back to suggest that sacked generals should be given another chance to command in combat before their formal exits. Such a soft dismissal, he contends, would preserve the dignity and self-respect of the officer in question.

Although Ricks argues that today's military is incapable of following the Marshall model, in fact it already does, just in a different form. U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt gave Marshall virtually unquestioned authority to shape the general officer corps, an authority never revived since. In the post-Marshall era, generals have continued to be fired in large numbers and often very publicly; the difference is in why, how, and by whom. These days, it is normally civilian leaders, not generals, who decide to remove generals from combat commands. Changes in statutes over the last 70 years have shifted authority for relieving senior generals from the chiefs of service to the secretary of defense, with input from the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (the position that most closely resembles Marshall's in World War II).

Ricks' idea that dismissal should be a basic tool of officer management, finally, is wrong. Firing generals does not make for better war fighting; battlefield genius can emerge just as easily from giving failing generals another chance to succeed. Union General Ulysses S. Grant failed at the Battle of Shiloh, but his distance from journalists in New York and Washington gave him time to refine his operational skills at Vicksburg and go on to lead the Army of the Potomac to triumph in the final campaigns of the American Civil War. And Ricks' chapter on the World War II general George Patton demonstrates that generals sometimes display leadership and moral courage by refraining from firing a

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Generally speaking: an officer meeting with U.S. General George Patton, Sicily, 1943

subordinate, such as when that subordinate, however deserving of dismissal, possesses battlefield skills that can save soldiers' lives. Patton's egregious slapping of soldiers at two field hospitals in Sicily in 1943 was cause for court-martial. But Marshall and his fellow U.S. general Dwight Eisenhower resisted political and popular pressure to fire him because they both knew that Patton was the only senior general in Europe with the élan and aggressiveness to lead the pursuit of the Wehrmacht across France to the German border.

General Stanley McChrystal is perhaps today's closest analog to Patton. As head of the U.S. Joint Special Operations Command during the middle years of the last decade, McChrystal oversaw the development of a precision-killing machine unprecedented in the history of modern warfare. The scope and genius of his creation will be appreciated more fully in later decades, once the veil of secrecy has been removed. But media controversy constantly dogged McChrystal's accomplishments: the Joint Special Operations Command's night raids drew the ire of critics, the mishandling of the friendly fire death of the former professional football player and U.S. Army Ranger Pat Tillman sparked calls for McChrystal's dismissal, and the anti-administration rants of some members of his staff to a reporter for *Rolling Stone* ultimately led to his firing. Robert Gates, who was then U.S. secretary of defense, and his senior military advisers supported McChrystal until the end; they realized that, like Patton, his missteps were worth tolerating in order to keep him on the job. But they were overruled.

Robert H. Scales

For all of Ricks' lengthy discussion of recent commanders whom he considers failures worthy of dismissal, there is little mention of McChrystal, who represents the reverse case. And for all the pages Ricks devotes to Iraq, where maintaining incompetent generals was correlated with a lack of success, there is little discussion of Afghanistan, where a lack of success has been correlated with repeated general-officer changes—something that undermines Ricks' case.

FIGHTING FAIR

One problem with *The Generals* that a casual reader might not appreciate is the extent to which Ricks' analysis appears to betray a service bias. To put it bluntly, Ricks seems to like the Marine Corps and not care much for the U.S. Army.

For example, he devotes almost a tenth of the book, 42 pages, to a single battlefield narrative: the retreat from the Chosin Reservoir in Korea during the winter of 1950. This episode offers the worst possible comparison between the performance of the army's 32nd Infantry Regiment and that of the Fifth and Seventh Marine Regiments. All the units attempted to extract themselves from Chinese attacks along the reservoir; the army regiment was cut to pieces, whereas the marines escaped virtually intact. Ricks concludes that the huge difference in casualties was due to superior Marine leadership. His analysis of this particular case is fair, but what most readers will not realize is that the case is not representative of the larger record. A side-by-side comparison of the fighting performance of both services from World War II to Afghanistan would have yielded a much more balanced picture of the quality of their leadership.

Ricks rightfully attributes soldier abuses in combat to bad generalship, devoting a chapter to Major General Samuel Koster's cover-up of the 1968 My Lai massacre and several pages to Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez's responsibility for the abuses at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison, during the Iraq war. But the two most egregious violations of soldier ethics in Iraq were the killing of innocents at Haditha by a Marine unit and a similar atrocity committed by soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division at an outpost near Baghdad. Both incidents were horrific, but Ricks gives the army atrocity 60 lines of text and the incident involving marines just five.

Two other treatments of army generals are worth noting. Ricks can find little fault with the military effectiveness of General Colin Powell, one of Marshall's most competent and influential successors. So what does Ricks do? He concentrates his narrative on Powell's performance as secretary of state during the George W. Bush administration—certainly a sad episode for a great general, but by no means indicative of his military contributions. Finally, Ricks devotes a chapter to the vitriolic media battle fought between General Norman Schwarzkopf, the U.S. commander during Operation Desert Storm, and one of his subordinates, Lieutenant General Frederick Franks, the commander of the U.S. Army's VII Corps. Ricks finds both men flawed and blames the Gulf War's indecisive outcome on them. Yet as the author of the official history of the U.S. Army during Desert Storm, I hardly recognized Ricks' treatment of the campaign. He criticizes Franks for his caution and Schwarzkopf for stopping Franks prematurely. But a

fair treatment of Franks' actions shows not excessive caution but laudable prudence, and the decision to end the war after only 100 hours of ground fighting was entirely unexpected and came directly from President George H. W. Bush, not the military commanders in the field.

In short, Ricks is undoubtedly correct that Marine officers make superb generals. But despite what one might think after reading this book, U.S. Army officers do as well.

STRATEGIC NECESSITY

Beyond personalities, the larger questions at the heart of Ricks' book are about what constitutes great military leadership in today's world and how the armed services can foster it. Ricks starts a useful discussion of these questions through his treatment of the debate between General William DePuy and Lieutenant General John Cushman on the future of the U.S. Army after the Vietnam War.

The early 1970s were a bad time for the U.S. Army. Battered by its failures in Vietnam and ravaged by budget cuts, the institution was in crisis. Along with a core of other devoted officers, DePuy decided to try to rebuild the broken force, revamping both its esprit de corps and its mission and using his leadership of the new U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command to put his ideas into practice. DePuy's efforts produced many impressive results, including a renewed sense of professionalism and devotion to operational excellence. But his approach had some significant flaws as well. DePuy wanted to leave behind the entire experience of Vietnam, for example, and instead focus exclusively on the challenge of fighting the Soviets in a conventional land war in

Europe. He also concentrated on teaching the army how to fight rather than how to think about fighting.

DePuy began the rediscovery of the "operational art of war" by developing the Air-Land Battle doctrine, designed for a war against the Warsaw Pact in Europe. He and others followed this with a revolution in military training, institutionalized in the opening of the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, in California, and then the School of Advanced Military Studies at Fort Leavenworth, in Kansas. As a result of all this activity, by the 1980s the U.S. Army had become the best fighting force in the world at the tactical and operational levels of war. Along the way, however, the army had focused solely on preparing for large-scale conventional war against peer opponents (as opposed to a wide range of possible conflicts, including counterinsurgency) and neglected the broad educational enrichment needed for officers to turn tactical and operational skills into war-winning strategic genius.

Sensing these growing problems, in the late 1970s, Cushman began pushing back against DePuy, arguing that operational excellence, however essential, was only the first step toward reform. Cushman recognized that future generals would have to operate in a far more complex environment, requiring even the most junior of them to understand strategy as well as tactics and operations. They would need to learn to fight a war among the people, leveraging the fighting power of all the services, as well as interagency, indigenous, and multinational partners, and showing cultural sensitivity, political adeptness, and comfort with what Ricks terms "civil-military discourse."

Cushman's ideal of the thinking, strategic general, one might say, is General David Petraeus, who through two wars earned a reputation for leadership, innovation, and political finesse. He took his doctorate from Princeton University and literally wrote the book on counter-insurgency. Other standouts in his generation include General Martin Dempsey, the current chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and General Peter Chiarelli, the former army vice chief of staff, who reacted to the changing circumstances of the war in Iraq by studying at an Islamic cultural center and embedding his staff with the city council of Austin, Texas (so they could learn how to run a city). Petraeus, Dempsey, Chiarelli, and their colleagues from other services, such as General James Mattis of the Marines and Admiral Mike Mullen of the U.S. Navy, represent a new, post-9/11 generation of thoughtful and sophisticated generals, marked by serious study of the art of war and strategy.

Ricks notes that the DePuy-Cushman debate was a lost opportunity for the army to move beyond its narrow focus on operational excellence, and his reasoning would be widely shared by many close observers inside the army itself. But he does not take this point far enough, because Cushman's approach is exactly what the armed services should embrace today, even more fully than it currently does.

One constant from Marshall to Petraeus is that the winnowing process for the selection of general officers begins around the grade of major, when a few are singled out for early promotion and advanced military schooling. In DePuy's era, as in Marshall's, one such midcareer pruning was enough, because during the Cold War, the army knew that it needed

to concentrate on promoting officers with a special talent for maneuvering large units on a conventional battlefield. Today, however, good generalship requires a broader range of strategic gifts, including ones that do not necessarily reveal themselves at lower levels. The generals of the future will have to be capable of going beyond fighting from a battle plan to seeing the battlefield before any plans have been formulated, thinking in time and imagining cultural, political, and geostrategic circumstances that have yet to materialize. They will need not just tactical and operational skills but also intuition, imagination, agility, and a deep understanding of "the politics of war," in every meaning of that phrase.

Ricks understands this, but his notion that one can find such paragons through a Darwinian process of firing underperformers is shallow. What the U.S. Army and the Marine Corps really need is to develop a system of officer advancement that, beginning at the time of commissioning, seeks out the right men and women through early education and cultural immersion. In other words, they need to follow the Petraeus model, not the Marshall model, considering intellectual gifts to be just as important as management skills in selecting new brigadiers. Those with the right strategic stuff should be sent early in their careers (at about the grade of captain) to earn advanced degrees in subjects related to the art of war or to the world beyond U.S. borders. Like Petraeus, Dempsey, and Chiarelli, they should be given time to reflect on their profession through a year or two as an instructor at a military school. Those with special strategic gifts will have to be protected professionally from the few DePuy-era tactical generals still ensconced in various positions. The war colleges, the hubs of strategic learning in the U.S. system of military education, need to be more selective and academically rigorous so that they do a better job of producing truly educated generals who are able to offer the strategic leadership the military needs.

The final chapters of Ricks' book offer several good suggestions for how to produce better generals. Unfortunately, the author's earlier, tendentious treatment of history and misguided emphasis on firing as a panacea are likely to so alienate knowledgeable military readers that they will have closed the book long before then. The timing of the book is particularly bad, because over the past few months, senior army leaders have started planning reforms at the strategic level. And by giving civilian and military leaders the wrong idea about the army's problems, *The Generals* may actually harm these efforts. That is a shame, because Ricks' basic observation about the current lack of strategic generalship is spot on—and something that everybody should be concerned about.

Review Essay

Peace Out

Why Civil Society Cannot Save the World

Walter Russell Mead

Peace, They Say. BY JAY NORDLINGER. Encounter Books, 2012, 464 pp. $27.99.

The Global Right Wing and the Clash of World Politics. BY CLIFFORD BOB. Cambridge University Press, 2012, 240 pp. $95.00 (paper, $26.99).

Every aspiring beauty-pageant queen knows what to say when asked what she wants most: "World peace." World peace is at least nominally what we all want most. But evidently, we are not very good at making it. The modern peace movement is almost 200 years old; its origins can be traced to the period that followed the devastating wars of the Napoleonic era in Europe. In those two centuries, peace movements have had little discernible impact on world events, and what effect they have had has often been bad: the European peace and disarmament movement of the 1930s, for example, greatly facilitated Hitler's plans for a war of revenge. For all the good they have done, those well-intentioned souls who have sought to achieve world peace through the organization of committees, the signing of petitions, the holding of rallies, and the promotion of international treaties might just as well have stayed home.

Jay Nordlinger's *Peace, They Say*, an eminently readable history of the Nobel Peace Prize, reveals the embarrassing lack of a detectable connection between the work of peace activists and actual peace. Nordlinger, an editor at the conservative *National Review*, gleefully mocks generations of Norwegian susceptibility to the once admired but now ludicrous ideas that inspired the world's peace movements: the fad for arbitration that figures such as William Jennings Bryan advocated in the decades before World War I; the argument of the economist and British parliamentarian Sir Norman Angell that war's economic irrationality would prevent twentieth-century wars; the naive hope

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vested in the League of Nations; the childish confidence that the Kellogg-Briand Pact, that noble 1928 treaty to outlaw war, would actually change things; the belief in "moral equivalence," which held that the best way to end the Cold War was to somehow split the difference between the East and the West; and the push for a "nuclear freeze" in the 1980s, whose proponents claimed that unless U.S. President Ronald Reagan's missile defense plans were stopped, the world would be doomed to a ruinous war. Nordlinger portrays the advocates of these positions at the height of their fleeting glory, as the Nobel Prize committee, in full accordance with what was then thought to be wisdom, gave solemn benediction to their ideas.

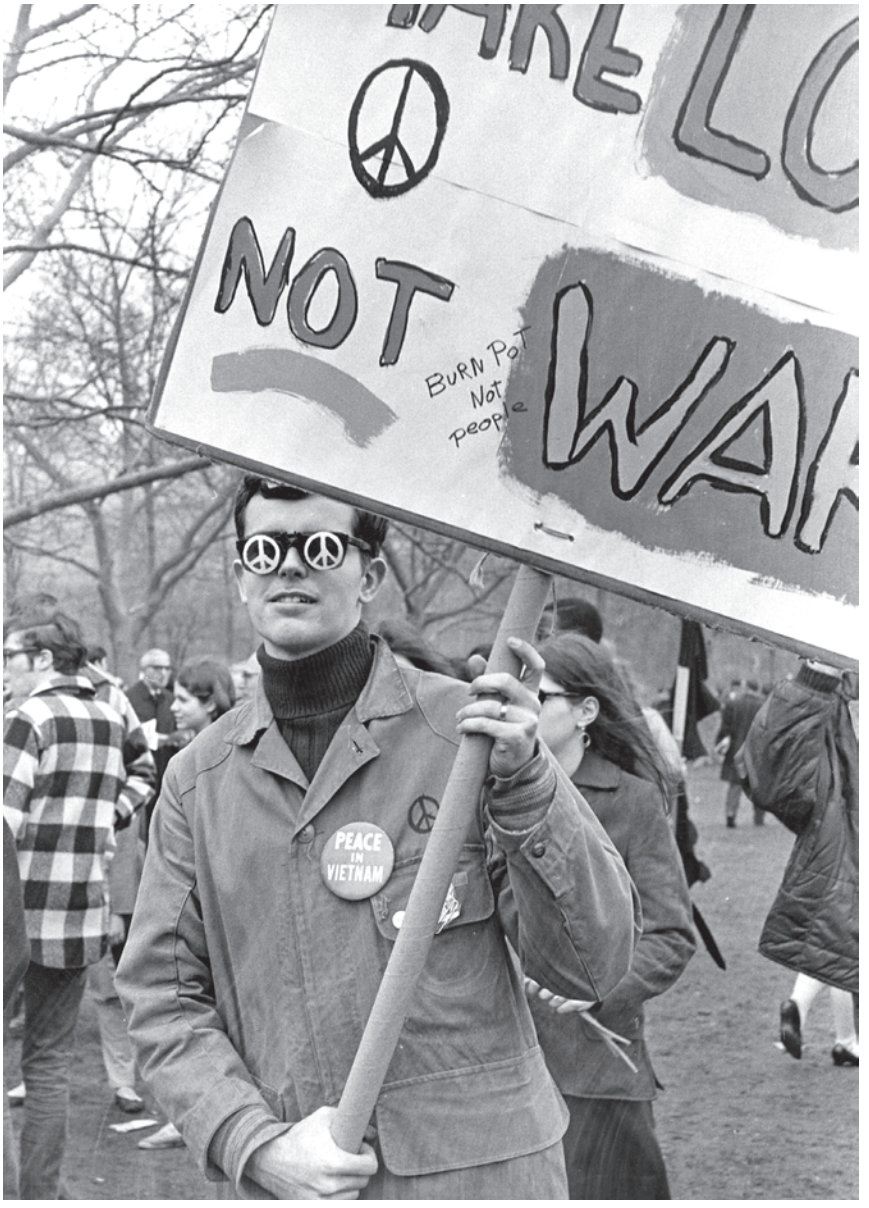
Nordlinger is generally no crueler than the facts force him to be. There are times when he twists the knife a bit, lingering over the allegations of fabrication that tarnished the post-prize reputation of Rigoberta Menchú Tum, the Guatemalan indigenous rights activist, and dwelling on Nelson Mandela's sad refusal to denounce the human rights abuses of dictators in Cuba and Libya. Nordlinger also notes an important instance of overkill. Three of former U.S. President George W. Bush's most bitter foes—Jimmy Carter, Al Gore, and Barack Obama—all received Nobel Peace Prizes during or shortly after Bush's tenure, and it is hard to avoid the conclusion that a major motive of the committee was to express its disapproval of Bush. Perhaps one anti-Bush award would have been enough; almost certainly, the committee could have stopped at two.

Ultimately, however, the most serious way to critique the Nobel Peace Prize is not to complain about the Nobel committee's biases but to note the historical insignificance of so many of the prize's winners. So many laureates, so many good intentions, so many theories and ideas about how peace can be made—and yet so little peace. As Nordlinger points out, Alfred Nobel's will offered the committee the opportunity to abstain from awarding prizes in years in which no suitable recipients could be found. But the committee has rarely exercised that right. Perhaps in awarding peace prizes, less would be more.

Nordlinger also makes plain that although those who seek to end war once and for all always fail and often end up looking ridiculous, the cause of peace is sometimes genuinely aided by those who try to end particular wars. He praises Theodore Roosevelt, who received the Peace Prize in 1906 for helping negotiate the treaty to end the war between Japan and Russia, and Mairead Corrigan Maguire and Betty Williams, peace activists who helped bring the conflict in Northern Ireland to an end. The awards that have held up best over time are those that have gone to people who either ended specific wars or alleviated the suffering wars cause. Perhaps the lesson is that although war cannot be ended, wars can.

YESTERDAY'S WHINE

Nordlinger's account points to a curious mixture of vanity and charity common among the ultra-elites of the contemporary West, who seem driven by a deep need to believe that they are achieving something important. Significance, after all, is the ultimate luxury good. No rock star, Hollywood celebrity, foundation bigwig, public intellectual, retired corporate titan,



GETTY IMAGES / FRED W. McDARRAH

Blinded by the light: protesting in Central Park, New York City, 1967

or trustafarian do-gooder likes to think that he or she is floating idly and purposelessly across the surface of history. But that is precisely what almost all of them do, despite the reassuring buzz of sympathetic media. And since many of the causes that most appeal to this class of "activist" don't lend themselves to solutions of any kind, much less quick and easy ones, the feeling of purpose can be hard to maintain. Would-be world savers and their acolytes must constantly fend off a suspicion that they do not know what they are doing and that their efforts

will be forgotten as quickly as those that have gone before. This season's earnest conversations on Sunday talk shows and high-minded panels hosted by the Aspen Institute will be irrelevant in months. Even the most compelling ideas about fostering peace, democracy, and development will soon look foolish and hopelessly out of style.

One way to assuage this fear is to subscribe to a grand narrative of social and intellectual progress. Whatever our ideological orientation—left, right, or center—all of us who care about world affairs like to believe that we are not just cycling through disposable ideas about how to achieve peace and cure poverty; rather, we are moving purposefully toward the truth. We like to think that social knowledge is cumulative, like scientific knowledge, and so each year, each decade, we learn and we grow. That way, each time we discard an old, failed idea, we are not admitting defeat or saying we have made a mistake. We have not wasted time, money, and the hopes of the world chasing chimeras. Rather, we have tested another hypothesis and found it wanting. In the long march toward truth, even our errors represent progress toward a better world. We are not wandering aimlessly on a darkling plain: we advance with a purpose.

But as the litter of failed hypotheses grows ever deeper beneath our feet, it becomes harder and harder to trace any logical path through the rubble. Think, for example, of all the competing models for eliminating poverty in Africa that have been fashionable during the past six decades: free markets or closed economies; globalization or capital controls; fixed rates or floating rates; strong central governments or states that allow for regional autonomy; import substitution or export-oriented growth; education as the key, or women as the key, or health care as the key; tribalism or anti-tribalism; subsistence agriculture or large commercial farms; and so on. The pendulum swings, but poverty persists.

World peace, the conquest of poverty, the triumph of human rights: the goals are obviously important and desirable. But despite some heartening progress since the end of World War II, they have remained stubbornly unachievable. This truth is too scandalous to be widely accepted: too many important political movements, powerful institutions, and high-profile people would be undermined by a frank acknowledgment of the limits of human endeavor when it comes to the weightiest problems of all. A great deal of global policy chatter, therefore, centers on an elaborate game of Let's Pretend. We speak, write, and act as if we know what we are doing. Faced with the increasing difficulty of fitting the facts to a grand narrative of progress, but not willing to admit just how vacuous most policy discourse has become, we have largely stopped thinking about the history of theories of peace and development. The subject is too embarrassing, the implied critique of today's hopeful nostrums too corrosive, for this kind of history to be welcome.

That was not the case in more confident times. During the Kennedy era, Marxist historians and liberal scholars of progress, such as Walt Rostow, believed that ideas about peace and prosperity followed one another on a verifiable, predictable path of scientific development. Rostow and others considered the intellectual history of theories of poverty and peace a valuable and necessary ingredient in policy discussions,

since it provided a context that legitimated and explained new proposals for change. But we have gotten past that; now, progress is something we assume but don't analyze. This is particularly true of liberals and progressives, who, instead of subscribing to theories of change, now place their faith in an agent of change: international civil society, which they believe to be a force that will end war and oppression and usher in a new and just world.

BAPTISTS AND BURQAS

Few ideas today are as fashionable as the belief that nongovernmental organizations, aroused citizens, and supporters of civic awareness and good governance are saving the planet. This is what might be called the cult of civil society: an unreasoning but deeply felt faith in organizations such as the League of Women Voters, Human Rights Watch, and Planned Parenthood, whose adherents cheer the emergence of like-minded groups in other parts of the world. Earlier generations of thinkers on the left were less impressed by such groups: Karl Marx considered them to represent "bourgeois socialism" and had a low opinion of their ability to promote change. But for those in thrall to civil society, the early phase of the Arab Spring—when secular liberals tweeted about human rights in Tahrir Square—represented a kind of peak moment: in the heart of the Middle East, civil society was on the march against secular tyranny and religious obscurantism alike.

Clifford Bob could have warned them that things were bound to become more complicated. In his new book, *The Global Right Wing and the Clash of World Politics*, Bob, a political scientist, strips away the myths that have allowed liberals and progressives to believe that the growth of civil society will inevitably aid their cause. It turns out that global civil society isn't just for liberals. The National Rifle Association is as much a part of it as Human Rights Watch, and Bob shows how the NRA has used its political power to block progress on a UN treaty that would regulate the export of small arms. The Roman Catholic Church and the Muslim Brotherhood are also well-established civil-society groups; Bob shows how these and other religious groups have stymied UN efforts to recognize gay rights and promote birth control.

The belief that civil society will always march with the left is not without some foundation. Until fairly recently, Bob argues, liberal groups did enjoy an advantage in the fight to shape the international agenda. Organizations such as Planned Parenthood were better run than their right-wing opponents and were able to write their ideas and values into the structure of international law. But that very success led to a powerful and still growing effort by conservative groups to counter the liberals' advantage. Today, Bob's analysis suggests, well-funded international networks of both religious and secular right-wing groups are pushing back. What Bob terms the "Baptist-burqa network"—a loose alliance of conservatives and moralists from a whole host of religious and cultural traditions—has succeeded in fighting liberal and gay rights agendas on a number of occasions, temporarily eliminating the reference to sexual orientation in a UN human rights resolution on extrajudicial killings in November 2010 and pushing for a definition of homosexual rights as "special,"

rather than "equal," human rights in international law.

A favorite tactic of global right-wing civil-society groups, Bob reports, is attempting to undermine the legitimacy of international institutions from within. Just as some European national political groups, such as the ultraconservative UK Independence Party, use their seats in the European Parliament to embarrass and attack the parliament and the European Union, globally oriented right-wing organizations use the platforms and influence offered by membership in global groups to limit the ability of those groups to act. Working from within the UN to block treaty efforts has been particularly effective; the consensus-oriented UN negotiating process offers enormous influence to a focused minority.

HOPE FOR CHANGE?

Bob's book demonstrates some of the reasons why faith in civil society is likely to go the way of other "lights that failed" in the last 100 years, making so many Nobel Peace Prize awards look dated and foolish. Both books remind readers that intractable problems, such as war, poverty, and injustice, are just that: intractable. Neither author thinks that all political effort is futile, but both are mindful that whatever incremental progress humanity makes will not be enough to solve the great historical problems anytime soon.

Taken together, the books do more than critique naive do-gooders. They offer guidance about the kinds of approaches to intractable problems that might actually offer some hope of limited success. People and organizations that want to make a real difference should avoid grandiose global goals and focus instead on smaller but achievable ones. This takes hard work and usually is not glamorous enough to attract extensive media coverage, but it is often how people make the world a better place. Just as Nordlinger shows that the peacemakers and Nobel laureates whose work holds up best are those who brought specific conflicts to an end, the organizations in Bob's account that get the most done are those that pursue limited goals with cunning and patience.

Both books also remind readers that the work of promoting social change is hard and unforgiving. It is much easier to fail than to succeed, and success is likely to be modest. Humanity does not agree on the best way forward; there are passionate disagreements about the kind of world we want to build and the best way to build it.

Perhaps the most fruitful focus for peacemakers and social campaigners would be to look for regional dragons to slay, rather than global ones. World peace may be out of reach. But within its borders, the EU has come fairly close to the vision of international peace that Nobel hoped to promote. Organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations suggest that regional groupings in other parts of the world might develop into zones of peace and human security.

So we can hope, at least. But if Nordlinger and Bob are even partially right, we must also recognize that there are no panaceas in global politics and that this generation's hopeful peace enthusiasts and civic activists will be lucky to achieve even very limited success.

Review Essay

Small War, Big Consequences

Why 1812 Still Matters

Donald R. Hickey

The War of 1812: Conflict for a Continent. BY J. C. A. STAGG. Cambridge University Press, 2012, 216 pp. $85.00 (paper, $24.99).
The Weight of Vengeance: The United States, the British Empire, and the War of 1812. BY TROY BICKHAM. Oxford University Press, 2012, 344 pp. $34.95.

The War of 1812 gets no respect. It's easy to see why: the causes of the war are still subject to debate, and they were sometimes unclear even to the warring parties. Most of the fighting took place on the U.S.-Canadian border, leaving few iconic battlefields like those of the Revolutionary War or the Civil War. And the results were so inconclusive that the treaty ending the war simply restored the antebellum status quo, without even mentioning the maritime disputes that had provoked the fighting in the first place. As a result, the war is often treated as insignificant in the United States and is all but forgotten in the United Kingdom.

But even small wars have consequences, and two recent books timed to coincide with the war's bicentennial reveal why the legacy of the War of 1812 has proved to be profound and lasting. The war shaped a generation of American leaders and transformed the country's ragtag armed forces into a professional military, paving the way for the rise of a powerful national security establishment. American military victories during the war encouraged an aggressive territorial expansionism that later generations would call manifest destiny. And the apparent stalemate that marked the war's end masked an important shift in U.S.-British relations: the emergence of a détente that ultimately developed into an alliance, which in turn helped sustain the Pax Britannica of the nineteenth century and the Pax Americana of the twentieth.

A SECOND WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

When the United States declared war on

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the United Kingdom in 1812, it cited a long list of grievances as justifications. The main American complaints were the British navy's enforcement of "orders in council," which restricted U.S. trade with Europe, and the British practice of impressment, the forcible removal of sailors from American merchant ships to fill out the crews of British warships. Although both policies harmed U.S. interests, that was not their primary aim. Rather, they were part of the United Kingdom's effort to win its war with Napoleonic France. The British could defeat Napoleon only by maximizing the use of their naval power. That meant shutting off French trade and keeping the sea-lanes open to their own vessels, both of which required a strong navy.

The United Kingdom contended that a significant number of its sailors were deserting their posts and essentially hiding out on American civilian vessels. Impressment, from the British point of view, was a deterrent against such behavior, without which the Royal Navy would suffer wholesale desertions, leading to the collapse of British sea power. To the British, the U.S. declaration of war was a stab in the back at a time when the United Kingdom was waging war against French tyranny and barbarism on behalf of the entire civilized world.

That context mattered little to most Americans, however, who embraced the fighting as a second war of independence, a struggle to preserve their hard-won autonomy in the face of British bullying. Most members of the Democratic-Republican Party, which controlled Congress at the time, supported the decision for war, whether reluctantly or enthusiastically. There was, however, strong opposition from some quarters. Most implacable of all were members of the Federalist Party, who believed that the fledgling young republic could never win significant concessions from the mighty British Empire. The Federalists in Congress voted unanimously against the war and thereafter tried to bring it to a speedy end by continuing their opposition, both in Congress and in the states they controlled (which were mostly in New England).

Over such objections, the United States went to war. Since the Americans could not challenge the British on the high seas, they targeted Canada, which was still a British territory at the time, launching invasions in 1812 and 1813. But except in the remote west, the Americans were defeated everywhere. The U.S. Army was ill prepared for war, the logistic challenges were nearly insuperable, and the foe—a small but veteran British army aided by capable Native American allies—was formidable. Nevertheless, in 1814, when the end of the war in Europe allowed the British to take the offensive, they faced some of the same obstacles that the Americans had encountered earlier, such as the difficulty of keeping their frontlines reinforced and supplied. Except for successfully occupying Washington, D.C., and a hundred miles of the Maine coast, the British counteroffensive was no more successful than the Americans' initial strikes, and in 1814, the fighting ended in a battlefield draw, pushing both countries to a settlement in the peace negotiations in Ghent.

Historians have sometimes blamed the United States' missteps and failures during the war on President James Madison. Shy, scholarly, and short, "Little Jemmy" has often been portrayed as a

weak leader, dragged into the conflict by hawkish members of Congress, defied by insubordinate cabinet members, and unwilling to make the tough decisions needed to carry the nation to victory. In *The War of 1812*, the historian J. C. A. Stagg, who oversees the University of Virginia's publication of Madison's papers, challenges that view. Madison was not pushed into war, Stagg argues, but rather demonstrated his willingness to undertake hostilities even before Congress met to debate the issue. And according to Stagg, Madison had little choice but to rely on incompetents, such as Secretary of War William Eustis and Secretary of the Navy Paul Hamilton early in the war and Secretary of the Treasury George Campbell later on, because capable men willing to take on onerous wartime cabinet responsibilities were in short supply. In Stagg's portrait, Madison was not at a loss to make policy decisions and invariably made his thinking on policy matters clear.

Instead of attributing the United States' wartime struggles to poor leadership, Stagg emphasizes a more fundamental problem: the nation's "inability to develop sufficient military power." In his analysis, Stagg identifies a number of institutional weaknesses that kept the army from performing to expectations: a lack of stability, cohesion, and sometimes even competence in the officer corps and a lack of sufficient training among enlisted men. The Republic's military weaknesses were exacerbated by its financial problems. In 1811, Congress had refused to renew the charter of the First Bank of the United States, the country's central bank, because it was considered an aristocratic institution that catered to the rich and was subject (through stock purchases) to British control. Then, once the war began, Congress was slow to increase taxes to pay for it. As a result, in 1814, the United States suffered its first severe credit crunch. As capital seized up, the U.S. Treasury found it could no longer borrow or even move money around the country; ultimately, it defaulted on the national debt. (Ironically, the United States was able to pay its overseas bondholders only because its international banker, the British firm Baring Brothers, advanced the funds needed to cover U.S. obligations abroad.)

Stagg comes close to suggesting that considering how ill prepared the United States was, its war against the British was unwinnable. In his view, the U.S. decision to take on the United Kingdom was as an act of extraordinary hubris. After all, even great powers cannot always work their will on others, and at the time, the United States was only a second-rate power. As Daniel Sheffey, a Federalist congressman from Virginia who opposed the war, remarked on the eve of the conflict: "We have considered ourselves of too much importance in the scale of nations. It has led us into great errors. Instead of yielding to circumstances, which human power cannot control, we have imagined that our own destiny, and that of other nations, was in our hands, to be regulated as we thought proper."

BRING IT ON?

An overly generous appraisal of its own strength might have led the United States to miscalculate its way into declaring war on a genuine great power. But is it possible that the British were, in fact, spoiling for a fight with their erstwhile American subjects? Historians often give short shrift

to British intentions and attitudes about the war, generally concluding that the British saw the fight against the United States as a sideshow. In *The Weight of Vengeance*, Troy Bickham counters that conventional wisdom, arguing that the war "was not militarily, strategically, or emotionally a peripheral event for Britain and its empire." Indeed, Bickham believes that the British government hoped for war and that, as a consequence, "Britain pursued a prewar and wartime agenda that aimed to humble the United States and demonstrate that Britain could ignore American national sovereignty."

To make his case, Bickham relies heavily on newspaper reports from the time, ferreting out printed matter from across the British Empire to show that the war found support not only in England itself but throughout the realm. The *Bermuda Gazette*, for example, compared the "murderous despotism" of France with the "generous and enlightened" nature of the United Kingdom and complained that the Americans were "meanly profiting" while the British spent blood and treasure defending the world from French oppression.

But Bickham occasionally falls into the trap of assuming that public opinion and elite views reflect government policy. He shows that some British newspapers and some segments of British society favored war with the United States in 1812. But the idea that the British government wanted a war is clearly contradicted by the rest of the historical record. The correspondence of government leaders—Lord Liverpool, Lord Castlereagh, the Duke of Wellington, and others—shows that they almost always preferred a moderate course of action. Bickham pays too little attention to such government sources, which make clear that the overriding British aim in this period was to win the war in Europe. All else was subordinated to that objective; the war with the United States was an unwelcome distraction.

That priority explains why the British waited to authorize reprisals for a full two and a half months after receiving news of the declaration of war and in the meantime allowed scores of American ships in British ports to return home. The British did not welcome war with the United States; they reluctantly accepted it as preferable to giving up policies that might undermine their war effort in Europe. In fact, by the late summer of 1812, the British had eliminated the orders in council, leaving impressment as the only unresolved issue of any consequence. And in the eyes of the British, surrendering this practice as long as the war with France continued was simply unthinkable.

Bickham tends to overstate British hostility toward the United States in the prewar period. But his analysis of the peace negotiations that ended the war—the first fresh treatment of that subject in years—captures the moderation and restraint that characterized British diplomacy during this era and allowed the British Empire to secure peace by offering its enemies terms they could live with. Although initially the British demanded U.S. concessions, including the creation of a Native American barrier state in the Old Northwest and changes to the U.S.-Canadian border, in the end they dropped those demands in response to stiff American resistance and settled for a return to the antebellum status quo represented by the Treaty of Ghent. By

holding on to Canada and preserving their maritime rights, the British could have claimed that they had won the war. But by resisting British demands at Ghent, the Americans boasted that they had won the peace.

WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

Although it is hard to determine who was the true victor, there is no doubt that the struggle left a profound and lasting imprint on all the participants. The Americans learned a number of lessons, including the importance of military preparedness and the need to develop the financial and transportation infrastructure to support war. The United States maintained a large peacetime army after the war and carried out major programs to expand its navy and build coastal fortifications. It also resurrected the country's central bank and built miles of roads, bridges, and canals. The U.S. Army emerged from the war as a professional service, and with the U.S. Military Academy funneling a steady stream of new recruits into the officer corps, the army would never again find itself in the sad state it had been in when the conflict began. The U.S. Navy was already a capable service in 1812, but it, too, emerged with an enhanced commitment to professionalism, and at the end of the war, Congress created the Board of Navy Commissioners to ensure that it retained that commitment.

No less significant was the way that the war transformed the American cultural landscape and political imagination. The war fostered a heady national self-confidence and patriotism that gave momentum to manifest destiny. And it gave Americans a set of patriotic symbols and slogans that helped define the emerging republic as a unified nation: "Old Ironsides," Uncle Sam, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

The war also promoted the careers of a number of men who went on to dominate the American political and military establishments. No fewer than four wartime leaders were later elected president: James Monroe, who served as secretary of state and secretary of war; John Quincy Adams, who served on the peace delegation at Ghent; William Henry Harrison, who engineered the U.S. victory over the Native Americans at Tippecanoe before the war and then the triumph over British and Native American forces at the Battle of the Thames, in present-day Ontario, during the war; and Andrew Jackson, whose success commanding American forces catapulted him into the national limelight and made him a symbol for the entire postwar era. The Battle of New Orleans, Jackson's greatest triumph, was the biggest and bloodiest engagement of the entire war. Since the battle was fought two weeks after the peace treaty had been negotiated (but before it had been ratified), it had no impact on the war's conclusion. But Americans quickly convinced themselves that the battlefield victory had produced the favorable settlement, an act of mythologizing and romanticizing war that would become a fixture of American political culture.

As Americans celebrated their victory at New Orleans, they lost sight of the causes of the war and forgot how very close the nation had come to military defeat and financial collapse. Instead, they boasted how they had beat "the conquerors of the conquerors of Europe." Just a year later, *Niles' Weekly Register*, one of the nation's leading magazines, would unabashedly claim that the United States "did virtually

dictate the Treaty of Ghent." Thus, without losing a beat, Americans managed to fit the war into a developing national narrative of exceptionalism.

For Canadians, the war initially served to cement their loyalty to the British Empire. Later, however, Canadians looked back and concluded that the War of 1812 was, in fact, their war of independence. The heroes of the war were elevated to the Canadian national pantheon, especially General Isaac Brock and the Shawnee leader Tecumseh, whose combined forces overcame the Americans during the Siege of Detroit, and Laura Secord, the wife of a Loyalist soldier, who supposedly warned British forces of an impending American attack. According to a recent poll, Canadians now rank the war as the third most important event in their history (after the establishment of the Canadian Confederation in 1867 and the completion, in 1885, of the Canadian Pacific Railway), and the Conservative-led government in Ottawa is spending millions of dollars on programs designed to further raise the profile of the conflict among Canadians.

In the United Kingdom, the war was quickly forgotten by the public, overshadowed by the end of the Napoleonic Wars and especially by the British triumph at Waterloo, which played much the same role in the British imagination that the Battle of New Orleans played in the postwar United States. British officials, however, did not have the luxury of forgetting the American war. Although they discarded their Native American allies (who were the biggest losers in the war), the British still had to grapple with the problem of defending Canada against the growing colossus south of the border. Study after study showed that the cost of preparing adequate defenses would be prohibitive, and the Canadians refused to contribute, claiming that such defense was an imperial responsibility. Thus, British officials concluded that their best policy was to accommodate the United States, even if it meant occasionally sacrificing interests elsewhere in the empire. The British could live with an assertive and land-hungry United States as long as it did not threaten Canada because the Americans were unlikely to pose a challenge to the United Kingdom's two main foreign policy objectives: maintaining a balance of power on the European continent and keeping the seas open to British trade.

At the time, not many people thought the War of 1812 would be the last Anglo-American war, because it appeared to settle nothing. And in spite of the British policy of accommodation, there were recurring Anglo-American tensions and even a war scare or two in the decades that followed. But because both sides could live with the Treaty of Ghent, there was no need to revise it. Both nations gradually came to see themselves as bonded together by shared values and culture and realized that letting any crisis escalate into war was unlikely to benefit either. By the end of the nineteenth century, whatever issues had once divided the two nations either had been resolved or had passed into history. By then, memories of the War of 1812 had faded, and a relationship that had once been contentious and antagonistic turned into a genuine accord. Two world wars turned that accord into an alliance that persists to this day.

Response

Are Taxes Too Damn High?

The Debate About the Rate

Cut and Grow

GROVER G. NORQUIST

Andrea Campbell tips her hand partway through her essay "America the Undertaxed" (September/October 2012) when she writes that "the central debate in U.S. politics is whether to keep taxes, particularly federal taxes, at their current levels in the long term or emulate other advanced nations and raise them."

So the choice facing Americans is between maintaining the size of the government under President Barack Obama and expanding it further? Who knew? In framing things this way, Campbell posits a Brezhnev Doctrine for U.S. government spending and taxation: what the government takes and spends today is forever ceded by Americans to the state, and that portion of their income not yet taken by the government is negotiable. Such ideological blinders limit the author's ability to understand or explain how the United States arrived at its present level of historically high spending and taxation—and what the American people would like its government to do and how much it would like it to cost in the future.

The U.S. government was created to maximize liberty. Unlike the European nations Campbell offers as models for how much Americans should be taxed, the United States was not organized around defending or promoting historical land claims or one religion, tribe, or ethnicity. Americans are a people of the book: the Constitution. According to the founders, government should play a limited role in the lives of Americans, by providing for a common defense, the rule of law, property rights, and a justice system that protects them.

Despite these strict limits, the U.S. federal government has grown enormously in size, cost, and power over the last two centuries, mostly as a result of the country's engagement in successive wars. With each conflict, Washington increased its spending and powers of taxation under the false flag of temporary necessity and appeals to patriotism. After each war, the government refused to return to its previous size and level of power.

This growth can be seen in the numbers. The federal government consumed less than four percent of GDP in 1930,

9.8 percent in 1940, and 16.2 percent in 1948. By 1965, the number had climbed to 25 percent of GDP, and it hit 30 percent in 2000 (compared with the average among members of the Organization for Cooperation and Development of 37 percent). Today, Campbell claims, raising taxes still higher, "perhaps by a few percentage points of GDP," would "provide the government with much-needed revenue. And it might not have a detrimental impact on the U.S. economy, perhaps even spurring it." But the economic crisis in Europe, where taxes and spending are already higher, makes that argument a little difficult to swallow.

The United States' major political parties are now diametrically opposed on the question of the size of government. Gone are the days when Nixon Republicans and Kennedy Democrats argued about whether the government should get bigger or much bigger, and how quickly. No Republican House member voted for the 2009 stimulus package, and only one Republican member of Congress voted for Obamacare's 20 tax hikes and massive spending increases (and he is no longer in Congress). Meanwhile, the modern Democratic Party has shifted from one that cast 56 Senate votes for the 1964 Kennedy-Johnson tax cut and 33 Senate votes for the 1986 Reagan tax reform into a high-tax ideological party that cast no votes for the 2001 income tax cut, under President George W. Bush, and only one vote for the capital gains and dividends tax cut of 2003 (and that voter is set to retire this year).

The budget that Obama released in February 2012 shows annual federal spending increasing by $1.5 trillion over the next ten years, producing $11 trillion in additional federal debt. Paying for all that spending will require dramatic hikes in taxes. Obama promised in the 2008 presidential campaign that under his plan, "no family making less than $250,000 a year will see any form of tax increase." On August 8, 2012, however, Obama changed his pledge, saying, "If your family makes under $250,000 . . . , you will not see your income taxes increase by a single dime next year." The promise to oppose all tax increases on incomes less than $250,000 was replaced by a promise to prevent only income tax hikes—and only for 12 months. Obama's new language opened the door to a value-added tax (VAT) at any time and to income tax hikes starting in January 1, 2014.

Obama's shift is important, for as Campbell points out, the difference between U.S. and European levels of taxation is mainly due to the prevalence of VATs in Europe. The United Kingdom has a VAT of 20 percent, France one of 19.6 percent, and Sweden one of 25 percent.

Advocates of higher taxes in the United States know that only a VAT or steep taxes on energy can cover the higher levels of spending in Obama's budget projections. Higher income tax rates do not raise useful amounts of money. The "Buffett rule," which would raise rates on earnings of more than $1 million a year would, according to the Congressional Budget Office, take in only $47 billion over a decade, less than one-half of one percent of the $11 trillion in debt that Obama's planned spending would produce.

GROWTH, NOT REDISTRIBUTION

Campbell faults the U.S. government for not using its power to tax and spend to

redistribute income earned by some Americans to others who did not earn it. The old argument for the welfare state was that such redistribution would reduce poverty. Yet history has shown that economic growth reduces poverty (see China under Deng Xiaoping) far more successfully than welfare transfer payments (see the U.S. war on poverty or the European welfare state).

Today, the left, as typified by Campbell, has shifted from talking about reducing poverty to pushing for "the reduction of inequality"—a result of the failure of decades of welfare spending to accomplish its stated goal. One can succeed in reducing inequality simply by damaging the highest-earning citizens—and without helping the lowest-income earners at all. Recessions and sluggish growth both would accomplish this end. Thus, Obama's economic policies, which have caused poverty and unemployment to increase, can be reckoned a partial success in the new war on inequality.

Still, it is laughable to argue that the present U.S. tax code does not sufficiently take from those who create income and wealth and jobs and give those dollars to those who don't. The top one percent of income earners in the United States pay 39.6 percent of all federal income taxes. The top five percent pay 61 percent. The top ten percent pay 72.7 percent. The lower half of income earners pay a mere 2.4 percent.

Speaking of economic classes in the United States, moreover, is a tad disingenuous. Between 2001 and 2007, 56 percent of those in the lowest income group moved to a higher group. Conversely, over the same time period, 66 percent of those in the top income group fell to a lower group.

Think of your own life. How much money did you earn at age 22? How about at 50? And then at 75? Are you at 22 supposed to vote to loot from 50-year-olds? And when you hit 50?

Campbell thinks the country should tax the rich more. Her position, echoed by the present occupant of the White House, is trickle-down taxation. Politicians and pundits who promise to tax the rich have not finished the sentence. They plan to tax the rich first—and then everyone else. This pattern has been demonstrated throughout history: most new taxes are first imposed on the rich. The Spanish-American War was paid for by a tax on the rich, namely, those who made long-distance phone calls. But that telephone tax lasted more than 100 years and soon hit everyone in the country. Similarly, the personal income tax was imposed in 1913 at seven percent on those earning more than $11.5 million in today's dollars. Today, more than half of Americans are hit with the tax.

What about the American people—what do they want? In his recent book *The People's Money,* the pollster Scott Rasmussen reports that surveys show that 64 percent of Americans believe that the country is overtaxed; 75 percent believe that Americans should pay no more than 20 percent of their incomes in federal, state, and local taxes; 68 percent prefer a "government with fewer services and lower taxes"; and just 22 percent want more services and higher taxes. Seventy-one percent, moreover, oppose paying higher taxes to "help reduce the federal deficit." And a McClatchy-Marist poll released this past July found that 52 percent of Americans favor extending the 2001 and 2003 Bush tax cuts to all Americans.

Campbell's complaint that the American government is insufficiently aggressive in redistributing income overlooks some big numbers. In 2011, of the some 200 means-tested federal welfare programs, the largest were Medicare ($560 billion), food stamps ($77 billion), housing subsidy programs ($50 billion), and various job-training programs ($18 billion). The U.S. government also spends a great deal of time and effort transferring money from average-income Americans to politically advantaged groups by providing higher incomes to its employees. Federal, state, and local governments pay their workers more than the private sector does: average compensation in the private sector is $60,000 a year, whereas for state and local employees, it is $80,000 a year, and for federal employees, it is $120,000 a year. Multiply the higher levels of pay, benefits, and pensions by 2.8 million federal and 19 million state and local employees and the transfer of wealth totals $548 billion each year.

Campbell devotes just one short paragraph to the budget proposal of Representative Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), the Republican vice presidential candidate, despite the fact that it is the consensus Republican path to reducing government spending and avoiding the tax hikes Campbell claims are desirable and inevitable. The Ryan plan would move to block grants for welfare programs, as President Bill Clinton did with Aid to Families With Dependent Children, and switch from defined-benefit to defined-contribution pensions, as the private sector has done, thereby reducing their cost as a percentage of GDP. Ryan's plan would also increase economic growth through reducing marginal tax rates—as was done by President John F. Kennedy in the 1960s and by President Ronald Reagan in the 1980s, with success that frustrates the American left to this day. Ryan's proposals to reduce both spending and taxation are not radical or new. They are a collection of what works.

Economic growth does more to increase government revenues, create jobs, and reduce poverty than do forcible transfers of income and wealth. If the U.S. economy grew at three percent a year rather than two percent for a single decade, federal revenues alone would increase by $2.5 trillion. Four percent growth rather than two percent for one decade would bring in $5 trillion, enough to erase the debt Obama has run up to date.

That kind of growth requires lower taxes. Look at the states: job creation and income growth are higher in low-tax states than in high-tax ones. According to the 2012 edition of the American Legislative Exchange Council's annual report *Rich States, Poor States*, in terms of growth in economic output, the nine states without a personal income tax outperformed the nine states with the highest personal income taxes by 39 percent over the past decade.

Americans can and do vote with their feet against high levels of government spending and high income, property, and sales taxes by moving from one state to another. But no one should have to leave the United States to find greater economic and personal liberty. Whereas Campbell exhorts the United States to become more like Europe, with its collection of unsustainable welfare states, let the country learn from Greece and Spain and move forward to an American future, not the European present.

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Campbell Replies

Grover Norquist is right on one count: taxes that are too high strangle economic growth. But so do taxes that are too low. And the United States is much closer to the latter situation than the former. Government spending in a variety of areas—education, infrastructure, scientific research, job training—is crucial for a robust economy. Sure, Americans have low taxes. But they are eating their seed corn. The lack of investment is eroding the very bases of future productivity.

Consider one important investment: infrastructure. The United States spends just 1.7 percent of GDP on transportation infrastructure, compared with Canada's four percent and China's nine percent, and less in real, inflation-adjusted terms than it did in 1968, as a 2011 report of the bipartisan coalition Building America's Future has noted. As a result, the United States ranks 25th in the world for infrastructure quality, according to a 2012–13 World Economic Forum study. Average commute times are longer in the United States than in many peer nations; the rail system is an international joke. Why? Because these systems are starved for revenue. The Highway Trust Fund is perpetually underfunded by a federal gas tax that has not been raised since 1993; a 2008 congressional commission found that current transportation spending is only 40 percent of the amount needed to keep the system in good repair and to make necessary upgrades. And this is the story across many economically crucial areas. Money can't solve every problem, but it can solve quite a few: crowded classrooms, mismatches between worker skills and the needs of high-tech manufacturers, collapsing bridges in Minneapolis. Lowering taxes may seem like a good idea, but it is a shortsighted one. In the long term, other nations that are investing fully in their economic capacity and in their people will eat the United States' lunch. A country can't achieve robust economic growth if it doesn't make the necessary investments.

Turning to social policy, Norquist wishes to rout social protections and return risk to individuals. The Ryan budget plan that Norquist extols would raise the Medicare eligibility age from 65 to 67 and turn Medicare into a voucher program that would increase out-of-pocket medical costs for senior citizens. The proposal to privatize Social Security contained in an earlier iteration of the Ryan budget would reduce the guaranteed benefit portion of the program. It is true that these programs must be adjusted to ensure their long-term viability. But there are ways to do so without so endangering seniors' incomes and the security of their health care. Thanks to Social Security and Medicare, senior citizens are currently one of the few groups in the United States with a low poverty rate. Do Americans really want to turn back the clock on that progress?

As for Medicaid, the health insurance program for the poor and for disabled elderly, the Ryan budget would change it from a program funded on an as-needed basis to a block-grant program, in which federal funding is capped. Past experience shows what happens to block-grant programs. A Clinton-era reform turned Aid to Families With Dependent Children, which is more commonly known as welfare,

into block grants to the states, the value of which was frozen at 1996 levels. As a result of this and other changes, currently only 27 percent of children in poor families receive welfare—half the proportion that did so before the reform. Now consider the effect of changing Medicaid to block grants. Medicaid insures the poor, but it is also the main payer for long-term care for older Americans. Because home health care and nursing homes cost tens of thousands of dollars per year, middle-class families with disabled older relatives quickly exhaust their resources and turn to Medicaid for help. A March 2012 Congressional Budget Office analysis showed that the Ryan budget would reduce federal spending by half on Medicaid and the much smaller Children's Health Insurance Program (designed to cover children in low-income families that don't qualify for Medicaid), from two percent of GDP in 2011 to 1.25 percent in 2030 and one percent in 2050. And this at a time when the elderly population will be growing, from 12.8 percent in 2009 to 20.2 percent in 2050, according to a Congressional Research Service analysis of Census data. What would happen to the elderly who need long-term care, which accounts for two-thirds of Medicaid spending, spending that would surely be cut dramatically? What would happen to their families? Keep in mind how widespread this need is: at age 65, the likelihood of requiring nursing-home care at some point during the rest of one's life is 49 percent; for home health care, it is 72 percent. If the Ryan budget goes through, the effects of the conversion of Medicaid to block grants will be felt just as the baby boomers are becoming frail.

The public opposes such changes. When asked in isolation whether they prefer small government and low taxes, Americans say yes. A desire for limited government in the abstract is part of U.S. political culture. But surveys show that the very same people who favor small government also want government spending increased in many areas. As the political scientist Kimberly Morgan and I show in our 2011 book, *The Delegated Welfare State*, data from the American National Election Studies reveal that majorities of Americans want more government spending for the poor and the homeless, for financial aid for college, for child care, for Social Security, and for public schools. According to the data, even majorities of Republicans and conservatives want spending on Social Security and schools increased; and majorities of those with low trust in government, those who say that the government wastes a lot of tax dollars, and those who say that the government in Washington is too strong want spending increased not only on Social Security and schools but also on programs for the homeless, financial aid for college, and child care. The political scientists Jacob Hacker and Paul Pierson have found that in survey questions specifically pitting spending increases against tax cuts, spending wins out.

It is true that high earners pay a large share of federal income taxes. But that is because they earn a high share of all income—the highest share since the Roaring Twenties and the highest share among the United States' peers. At the same time, their effective rate of federal taxation is at one of its lowest points in history. And a look at all taxes

together—federal, state, and local—reveals that the overall U.S. tax system is essentially flat: each income group pays about the same share in taxes as it earns in total income.

Norquist maintains that Americans support low taxes, even on the affluent, because of the possibilities for economic mobility. Yet numerous studies show that economic-mobility rates are quite modest in the United States: the likelihood that an individual worker will move from the bottom 40 percent of the income distribution to the top 40 percent over a year's span is less than four percent, and the likelihood of moving from the bottom 40 percent to the top 20 percent after 20 years is still less than ten percent, as the economists Wojciech Kopczuk, Emmanuel Saez, and Jae Song have shown. There is less intergenerational mobility in the United States than in peer nations, as Alan Krueger and Miles Corak, also economists, have pointed out. And polls reveal that lower- and middle-income people know that the economic deck is stacked against them. A July 2012 poll conducted by *The New York Times* and CBS News asked respondents whether it was still possible to start poor and become rich in this country. Over 80 percent of those with incomes above $100,000 said yes; more than 94 percent with incomes over $250,000 said yes. Among those with incomes below $15,000—the actual poor—only 50 percent agreed.

Tax debates ultimately come down to values: What kind of country do Americans want? A republic in which only the affluent prosper while lower- and middle-income groups remain mired in stagnant-wage jobs, face greater insecurity in retirement, and fear for their children languishing in poorly resourced schools? Or a nation in which all hard-working people have opportunities to capitalize on their talents and, later on, retire with confidence and dignity, all along secure in the knowledge that their well-educated children will have even better lives? That latter option is called the American dream.

Response

The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited

Why It Matters Who Blinked

Diplomacy, Not Derring-Do

JAMES A. NATHAN

Graham Allison ("The Cuban Missile Crisis at 50," July/August 2012) seems to believe that U.S. President John F. Kennedy's handling of the Cuban missile crisis was an unalloyed success. He also contends that the Kennedy administration's response to the crisis forms a template for the kind of steadfast resolve that U.S. policymakers should adopt today, specifically with regard to Iran and North Korea. But the Cuban missile crisis was hardly a triumph of presidential fortitude. At the core of Kennedy's strategy was a deal: the United States pledged to remove its missiles from Turkey within six months in exchange for the Soviet Union's withdrawal of its nuclear forces from Cuba.

The Soviet side of the bargain was public, but the central U.S. concession was kept secret. The Kennedy administration feared that it would appear weak if its agreement on the missiles in Turkey came to light. But the missile swap was hardly a mere "sweetener," as Allison claims; it was the main reason the Cuban missile crisis ended peacefully.

The facts of the compromise were long veiled. It was not until 1989 that Kennedy's former speechwriter, Theodore Sorensen, confessed that he had edited out the details of the missile swap from the published version of Attorney General Robert Kennedy's diary. It is now clear that President Kennedy engaged in two sets of negotiations: one with Moscow and the other with his ad hoc team of high-ranking advisers, the Executive Committee of the National Security Council (ExComm). And in his negotiations with the latter, Kennedy made sure that only his few most trusted advisers were privy to the crucial missile concession.

The ExComm barely contemplated a diplomatic solution to the Cuban missile crisis, putting forward a series of military plans ranging from a blockade to a preemptive strike. Unbeknownst to many other members of the ExComm, however, the president, Robert Kennedy, and Secretary of State Dean Rusk were striving for a deal involving the removal

of U.S. missiles from Turkey. The president even authorized Rusk to announce the missile swap at the United Nations if the Soviets would not accept a secret agreement. To Kennedy's relief, Moscow agreed to keep the understanding secret.

Without full knowledge of how the crisis was settled, U.S. policymakers exalted in an apparently unqualified victory. In this view, it was the Kennedy administration's gumption, not its deft diplomacy, that had compelled the Soviets to stand down. "We were eyeball to eyeball, and the other fellow just blinked," said Rusk of the crisis' resolution. This false characterization had unfortunate consequences—"resolve" became the watchword of Washington's Cold War policy, and a succession of administrations discarded the classic repertoire of diplomacy: international law, a respect for negotiation, and a prudent definition of the national interest.

Allison's narrative underscores the utility of threats, as long as they are credible. But straining to appear more determined, genuine, and fearsome can lead to miscalculation and heighten danger. Moreover, as Allison correctly notes, threats that are not carried out—even ones that initially appear credible—can seriously undermine policy. Each successive idle threat invites an adversary to test boundaries even more than the last time, and so the consequences of bluffing grow increasingly perilous. Allison is wrong, however, to conclude that it is necessary to risk war to achieve lasting peace.

The real lesson of the Cuban missile crisis is not that the measured use of threats is the key to defusing crises; it is that the essential challenge of crisis resolution is crafting an acceptable compromise to silence the drumbeat of war. This challenge is particularly critical in cases such as Cuba in 1962 and Iran today, when the price of failure is a potentially catastrophic confrontation.

Kennedy well understood this lesson. In nearly every international crisis of his presidency, he opted for diplomacy and dealmaking over force. In June 1961, he reached an agreement with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev that maintained Laos' neutrality rather than risk the military action the Joint Chiefs of Staff had advocated. Later, in July 1961, Kennedy signaled to the Soviets that Washington would accept a divided Berlin, thus unwinding a confrontation that was just as dangerous as the Cuban missile crisis. And after the Cuban crisis was resolved, Kennedy began a public campaign to temper the arms race. Yet Allison's account of the crisis as a case study of presidential resolve emphasizes the calculated use of threats over the more fundamental task of structuring a bargain.

Based on his reading of the Cuban missile crisis, Allison suggests that parts of an eventual U.S.-Iranian deal might also have to be kept secret. But surely, it would have been better for the Kennedy administration to reveal the truth about the settlement that ended the crisis; instead, Rusk and U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara repeatedly lied to Congress. The long mischaracterization of how the Cuban missile crisis really ended not only taught a generation of U.S. policymakers a faulty lesson about the importance of threats but also damaged the American people's trust in official foreign policy narratives. A public deal to end the United States' protracted confrontation with Iran would be better than a secret one.

Against the backdrop of increasingly stiff U.S. and European sanctions on Iran and an incipient civil war in Syria, the Islamic Republic's sole ally in the Middle East, a diplomatic agreement could still end the standoff over the Iranian nuclear program. It would be folly for Washington to allow misplaced analogies to shape a decision that could lead to a third open-ended war in this still-young century.

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Allison Replies

James Nathan disputes my interpretation of the central lessons of the Cuban missile crisis. Unfortunately, Nathan misreads my argument. He asserts that I consider presidential resolve and threats to be the essence of successful crisis management, arguing instead for compromise and restraint. In fact, my article contends that all these components are required for success.

President John F. Kennedy's resolution of the 1962 crisis involved a subtle mix of threat and compromise, candor and ambiguity, coercion and inducement. If Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev had not accepted Kennedy's demand that he announce the withdrawal of Soviet missiles from Cuba within 24 hours, would Kennedy have ordered the air strike he threatened? The answer will never be known, but what seems certain is that Khrushchev would not have removed the missiles without the threat of force.

Resolving today's slow-motion confrontation over Iran's nuclear program will demand a similarly subtle mix. First, the United States needs to accept the irreversible realities of the situation: Tehran already knows how to build centrifuges and enrich uranium, and no U.S. policy is going to change that. Washington should work to place constraints on these activities so as to keep Iran as far from the development of a nuclear weapon as feasible, implement verification and transparency measures that maximize the likelihood that cheating will be discovered, and, finally, unambiguously threaten Tehran with a regime-ending attack in the event that it moves to construct nuclear weapons. Although Nathan may disagree, in my view, unless Iran's leadership believes that the costs of building nuclear weapons will be greater than the benefits those weapons would provide, the Islamic Republic will become a nuclear-armed state.

Ironically, U.S. actions in the Middle East over the past decade have taught regimes in the region both the value of nuclear weapons programs and the dangers of giving them up. Former Libyan leader Muammar al-Qaddafi, who ended his country's nuclear program under U.S. pressure, wound up on the wrong side of U.S. air strikes last year; former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, who didn't even have a nuclear weapons program in 2003, faced a full-scale invasion. As Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's supreme leader, summarized in an address to his people: "Qaddafi gathered up all his nuclear facilities and gave them to the West. And now, you can see the conditions our nation is living in versus their conditions." Given recent examples, Tehran has no reason not to want nuclear weapons if

it could acquire them without triggering an attack.

Nathan correctly notes that the Kennedy administration embraced—indeed, exaggerated—news headlines emphasizing the president's steely resolve in forcing Khrushchev to back down. And no one in the administration said anything for many years to cast doubt on Secretary of State Dean Rusk's oft-quoted line, "We were eyeball to eyeball, and the other fellow just blinked." But in fact, Kennedy knew better. After a celebratory victory lap, the president identified what he believed was the central lesson of the Cuban missile crisis: "Nuclear powers must avert those confrontations which bring an adversary to a choice of either a humiliating retreat or a nuclear war."

In other words, having peered over the nuclear precipice, Kennedy took away a simple lesson: Never again. He used the crisis as a learning experience to clarify what he called the "rules of the precarious status quo." After October 1962, neither superpower dared surprise the other with provocative actions that might risk nuclear war. Together with the Berlin crisis of 1961, then, the Cuban missile crisis became a turning point in the Cold War. In the immediate aftermath of these events, Washington and Moscow established a hot line for direct communications, signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty to stop nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere, and began negotiations that culminated in the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which limited the spread of nuclear weapons.

If these were the lessons that Kennedy drew, then why did he keep his concession on the missiles in Turkey a secret? Too many students of foreign policy imagine countries as moving pieces on the chessboard of international politics alone. Rarely do they remember former U.S. Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill's adage, "All politics is local." Applied to international affairs, O'Neill's maxim can serve as a reminder that U.S. presidents have to play three-dimensional chess. Every move on the horizontal board against an international adversary simultaneously moves a piece on the vertical board of domestic politics. While mistakes on the international chessboard can have major consequences for the world, blunders on the domestic chessboard can remove the leader in question from both games entirely. Kennedy kept the missile concession a secret, as many shrewd politicians would, to protect his seat at the domestic chessboard.

Revisiting the most dangerous moment in recorded history, Nathan is right to stir up debate over the secret nature of the deal to withdraw U.S. missiles from Turkey. But he is wrong to attribute Kennedy's success purely to concessions made to Moscow, just as he is wrong to mischaracterize my work as attributing the world's escape from nuclear catastrophe in 1962 simply to threats and presidential resolve.

Response

Afghan Endgame

How to Help Kabul Stand on Its Own

Haste Makes Waste

RONALD E. NEUMANN

Stephen Hadley and John Podesta accurately describe Washington's policy dilemmas and preferred outcomes in Afghanistan ("The Right Way Out of Afghanistan," July/August 2012). They correctly note the deep dysfunction of the current Afghan government and convincingly argue for a U.S. policy that relies on more than just military force. They are also right that although some U.S. financial support and troop presence in Afghanistan will be required after 2014, Washington's current commitments to the country are unsustainable.

What they fail to account for, however, is that the United States can bring about a stable Afghanistan only if it looks beyond the timeline of transition and focuses more on the reality in which its policies must operate. Hadley and Podesta overestimate what can realistically be accomplished in two years and ignore the dangers of trying to speed negotiations. They call for a synchronized transition strategy "that presses for a more legitimate Afghan government, a political settlement among the broad range of Afghan actors outside the current system (including those Taliban elements willing to participate), and a regional settlement that involves Pakistan." But these goals exceed Washington's means and might even increase its difficulties. To judge how much is possible requires looking as much at Afghan realities as at U.S. policy requirements.

Afghan governance is deeply flawed. Kabul's excessive corruption, favoritism, and lack of accountability are alienating many Afghans and providing fodder for Taliban propaganda. Yet repeated efforts by the United States to improve this situation have had little effect. Before pushing yet another American-made solution, Washington needs to understand why its past attempts at reform have failed and how it has sometimes made the situation worse.

Hadley and Podesta decry Afghan President Hamid Karzai's reliance on political appointments and spoils to maintain his alliances and consolidate his power. But Karzai has few other tools at

his disposal. He does not have ultimate say over the use of force in his country; the United States does. He has little money. He does not control the parliament, which is itself a weak institution consisting of power-hungry individuals rather than mature political parties. Before Karzai can fire corrupt officials, he needs to know that he can count on reliable U.S. support until a new political culture takes root.

Current U.S. policies offer no such reassurance. The Obama administration's public criticism of Kabul has confused many Afghans, leading them to believe that Washington wants to replace Karzai. Feeling abandoned, Karzai has relied more and more on corrupt supporters to sustain his position. The U.S. intervention in Afghanistan's 2009 election had a similar effect. Washington encouraged politicians outside of Karzai's circle to run against him, signaling that it wanted the president to lose, but it did nothing to actually oust him. This episode only increased Karzai's distrust of Washington while teaching him, as a result of his victory, that he could successfully stand up to U.S. pressure. This lesson will make it harder to prod him in the future.

By repeatedly discussing withdrawal dates, the Obama administration has only made matters worse. Many Afghans I have met in recent years, including government officials, opposition politicians, civil-society leaders, and military officers, have expressed the belief that virtually all U.S. troops will leave by 2014, that Afghan forces won't be ready to take charge when they do, and that chaos will follow. This fear has encouraged Afghan leaders from Karzai on down to hedge their bets and do whatever they can to assure their survival. Rather than fighting corruption, they are tightening their patronage linkages, preparing for civil war, and trying to make or steal as much money as possible in the event that they need to flee.

What all this means is that, paradoxically, the more Washington rushes and attempts to synchronize all aspects of the transition, the more it undermines its own goals. This is especially true when it comes to negotiations with the Taliban. The redoubled U.S. effort "to establish a road map for negotiations" that Hadley and Podesta advocate might sound reasonable in Washington. In Afghanistan, it appears rife with contradictions. The Taliban are resisting negotiating with Karzai; the non-Pashtun groups in the country trust neither the United States nor the Karzai administration and say they are prepared to fight rather than accept Taliban control. Washington is trying to mediate between these conflicting sides, but it is also a party to the negotiations. This merging of conflicting roles—mediator and combatant—causes Afghans to distrust Washington and fear that it will pursue its own interests instead of fairly arbitrating their disputes.

Above all, Hadley and Podesta err in their call for haste. A number of internal conflicts, from El Salvador to Namibia, have been resolved by negotiations. But each process took many years. If the United States is seen as rushing for the exits, the Afghan insurgents will most likely refuse to participate in negotiations unless Washington offers them a better deal—namely, a U.S. withdrawal with few protections for the government. With the insurgents holding out for a settlement only on their own terms, Washington would then be forced to choose between a weak agreement providing a fig leaf for

its abandonment of the country, a total failure of negotiations, and the indefinite engagement of U.S. combat troops.

These are all bad options born of haste—something the region's powers understand well and that has led them to conclude that Washington lacks commitment to its stated goals. Without firm U.S. backing, Afghanistan will not see the kind of sustainable "regional settlement" that Hadley and Podesta advocate. Pakistan and Iran will expect any agreement to be violated on all sides and will move to reinforce their proxies inside Afghanistan.

Hadley and Podesta's objectives make sense. But to achieve them, Washington must focus not just on getting to 2014 but also on what comes after. To their credit, the authors recognize that some forces and financial aid will be necessary beyond 2014. And the Obama administration has sought to convince the Afghans, the insurgents, and regional powers that NATO and the United States will not bolt after 2014. Yet the constant talk of departure dates undercuts the credibility of Washington's recent agreements to maintain a presence in the country. If Washington wants Pakistan and the Taliban to negotiate seriously, it must stop sending mixed signals.

Convincing others that Washington will not allow the Afghan government to collapse or the insurgents to win requires broadening the emphasis of policy beyond Hadley and Podesta's focus on 2014. The paradox is that trying to accomplish too much before 2014 will reduce the chances that the United States can ultimately withdraw without defeat. Rapid drawdowns of U.S. forces will undercut the plausibility of the United States' recent pledges and squander an opportunity to improve the quality of the Afghan military. Washington should therefore commit to some level of troop presence beyond 2014 and continue to emphasize that its financial promises to Afghanistan will be kept.

Such moves will not sit well with the war-weary American people, and neither the president nor his Republican opponent, Mitt Romney, can be expected to commit to them before November. But the challenges will all be waiting after the U.S. presidential election. And in order to secure a modicum of success from its experience in Afghanistan, the United States will still need a policy that pays close attention to the realities on the ground.

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Hadley and Podesta Reply

Our essay argued that given the reality on the ground in Afghanistan, a U.S. strategy dominated by security concerns alone will not produce a stable country with a legitimate government. The United States therefore needs to focus more on the political and economic elements of the transition and synchronize them with the current plan to hand over security responsibility to Kabul in 2014. Only in this way can there be a chance for a peaceful and sustainable settlement to the conflict in Afghanistan, one that avoids a continued insurgency or a return to civil war.

An important goal of the integrated strategy that we advocate is to ensure that Afghanistan holds an election in 2014

that leads to a more legitimate national government. President Hamid Karzai is constitutionally ineligible to run for reelection in 2014, and despite Ronald Neumann's sympathetic description of the political challenges that Karzai faces, Neumann himself observes that the Afghan government is plagued by "excessive corruption, favoritism, and [a] lack of accountability." So the political transition in 2014 is essential, and U.S. policy must aim to ensure that it succeeds.

Unless Afghanistan undertakes the kinds of electoral reforms and political outreach we recommend, its upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections will likely produce a government with little legitimacy. Such a government would not be able to carry out the primary security responsibility it is scheduled to assume beginning in 2014. This failure would be catastrophic not just for the United States but also, particularly, for Afghanistan, which might see a repeat of the disastrous civil war of the 1990s.

The goals we suggest for the political transition may be challenging to achieve, but they are not, as Neumann charges, an "American-made solution." They are the policies that many Afghans recommended to a bipartisan working group we chaired in 2011–12 on U.S. policy toward Afghanistan. These goals are important, therefore, not only because of "U.S. policy requirements" but also, and especially, because of "Afghan realities."

Neumann is right that stability in Afghanistan will require continued U.S. engagement beyond 2014. That is why we so strongly supported the signing of the U.S.-Afghan strategic partnership agreement, in which the United States committed to a long-term diplomatic, economic, and security relationship with Afghanistan. The United States and the international community have now pledged at least a decade of financial support to Afghanistan, and the United States has made a troop commitment past 2014, the exact size of which has yet to be determined.

If the political and security transitions of 2014 do not go smoothly, the Afghan people will not have the time that both we and Neumann believe they need to bring stability to the country. Our insistence that Washington focus on the transitions was not, as Neumann claims, an ill-advised "call for haste." It was based on a realistic analysis of the consequences for the long term if the existing plans and timetables already agreed on by Afghanistan, the United States, and the international community are not carried out successfully.

When it comes to outreach to the Taliban, Neumann criticizes an approach that is not our own. We share his assessment of the risks and the need for caution. So we proposed testing the willingness of some elements of the Taliban to leave the insurgency and enter the political process. The Afghan government must lead this process, in the context of a broader political outreach to all of Afghan society. Proceeding this way would help relieve the Afghan public's understandable anxieties about engaging with the Taliban. Washington should harbor no illusions about the prospects for a peaceful settlement. But now is the time to test the waters, while the Afghan government still has the benefit of tens of thousands of international troops in the country.

At the end of the day, of course, the United States cannot "bring about a stable Afghanistan." Only the Afghans can do that.

Recent Books on International Relations

Political and Legal

G. JOHN IKENBERRY

Governing the World: The History of an Idea. BY MARK MAZOWER. Penguin Press, 2012, 416 pp. $29.95.

In the aftermaths of the Napoleonic Wars and the two world wars, the Western great powers made repeated efforts to build a world order that would establish peace and protect their interests, organized around various types of international bodies. Mazower is interested in why they did this and why, in particular, the United Kingdom and the United States invested so much "time and political capital" in building international institutions. If the book has a general thesis, it is that the global institutions created in the name of liberal institutionalism have really been tools used by great powers to expand their influence, protect their sovereignty, and keep other countries in check. The most interesting chapter focuses on the way mid-nineteenth-century scientific visions of the world as a system, along with the new professions of statistics, engineering, and geography, spurred the creation of new forms of international organization and cooperation. Mazower is clearly fluent in the history he relates, but he fails to engage the vast literature of international relations scholarship that explores this topic, missing an opportunity to develop a more formidable and novel argument.

Advancing the Rule of Law Abroad: Next Generation Reform. BY RACHEL KLEINFELD. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2012, 281 pp. $49.95 (paper, $19.95).

Many of the United States' most important foreign policy goals—promoting markets, spreading democracy, fighting terrorism—hinge on strengthening the rule of law in other countries. Yet after decades of ambitious efforts by the United States and others, the rule of law is still absent in many parts of the world. Kleinfeld argues that the "first generation" efforts of governments and the aid community focused too narrowly on the reform of courts and legal institutions, which often had little impact on corruption, crime, and abuses of state power. She calls for a "second generation" agenda that would seek to influence the cultural norms and expectations of public servants and citizens, encouraging bottom-up change within civil society by focusing on power and culture instead of laws and institutions. Kleinfeld brings together a good grasp of the scholarship on law and society with the sensibilities and hard-earned

experience of a field practitioner. The result is essential reading for the foreign policy community.

Outlier States: American Strategies to Change, Contain, or Engage Regimes. BY ROBERT S. LITWAK. Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2012, 256 pp. $50.00.

Nothing has bedeviled U.S. foreign policy more since the end of the Cold War than how to deal with a collection of despotic, hostile, and dangerous middle-tier states, such as Iran and North Korea. In this lucid and thoughtful book, Litwak compares the performances of the George W. Bush and Obama administrations in handling such foes. In the aftermath the 9/11 attacks, Bush argued that "rogue" conduct derived from the character of the regime itself and used that notion to justify a shift from a policy of containing Iraq to one of regime change. Litwak argues that the Bush administration sent mixed signals on Iran and North Korea, never fully making clear whether the U.S. objective was regime change or behavior change. The Obama administration has tried to recast the debate by framing "outlier" status in terms of conduct that violates established international norms, offering Iran and North Korea a pathway into the community of nations. But this engagement strategy has also faltered. In the end, Litwak suggests that combining a strategy of containment with offers of negotiations is the best way to cope with states that threaten the international order.

The Revenge of Geography. BY ROBERT D. KAPLAN. Random House, 2012, 432 pp. $28.00.

While many observers see modernization and economic development as the most important factors shaping the world, Kaplan has remained an eloquent voice chronicling the darker undercurrents that limit cooperation and progress: resource scarcity, historical memory, cultural and ethnic divisions, and geopolitical rivalry. In his latest book, the journalist makes his most thoughtful statement yet about how power in world politics is shaped by these forces. Although the book does not delve deeply into intellectual history, Kaplan dusts off the ideas of such classical realists as Halford Mackinder, Hans Morgenthau, and Nicholas Spykman on geography—heartlands and "rimlands," oceans and sea power. In his explorations of the geopolitics of China, India, Russia, and the West, Kaplan demonstrates that the world is certainly not "flat" and that the first step in understanding great-power politics in the twenty-first century is still to look at a map. Geography has given the United States many strategic options. But Kaplan argues that short of a dramatic lurch toward isolationism, the United States is destined to remain the great balancing power in Eurasia.

Economic, Social, and Environmental

RICHARD N. COOPER

Free Market Fairness. BY JOHN TOMASI. Princeton University Press, 2012, 368 pp. $35.00.

The author, a political philosopher at Brown University, is troubled not only by the political polarization of contemporary American politics but also by the apparent mutual incompatibility, and hence mutual antagonism, between libertarianism and

claims for social justice that require some redistribution of income. Tomasi casts a skeptical eye on the supposed followers of classical liberal economists, such as Friedrich Hayek, and those of justice-oriented philosophers, such as John Rawls, arguing cogently that a proper reading of the two schools of thought reveals no deep philosophical mismatch. But it seems that their respective acolytes may be so ideologically committed that they don't really care what the masters actually wrote. Tomasi suggests something of a compromise between the two approaches, which he dubs "free market fairness" or "market democracy": recognizing that self-respect and dignity flow from making choices among opportunities, rather than from being told what to do by government officials, but also requiring governments to ensure that opportunities are, in fact, available.

The New Industrial Revolution: Consumers, Globalization, and the End of Mass Production. BY PETER MARSH. Yale University Press, 2012, 320 pp. $35.00.

Marsh, a journalist at the *Financial Times*, knows a great deal about the evolution of manufacturing. He foresees a fifth industrial revolution, following the earlier ones, which were based, respectively, on steam power and textiles, railroads and steamships, electricity and chemicals, and computers. The main characteristics of the next revolution—which Marsh believes has already begun and will unfold over the next three decades or so—will be a greater dispersion of manufacturing around the world, with numerous cross-border connections, smaller-scale production lines, more customization of products to suit the tastes of particular consumers, more niche firms, and a greater emphasis on providing consulting and follow-on services to customers along with products. Marsh illustrates his more general points with interesting details about particular firms: a leading German pencil firm, for instance, gets its graphite from Sri Lanka, its high-quality wood from Oregon, and its special clay from Germany, and it produces pencils in 14 plants around the world, including in Brazil, China, India, and Indonesia.

Hunger in the Balance: The New Politics of International Food Aid. BY JENNIFER CLAPP. Cornell University Press, 2012, 224 pp. $29.95.

Clapp helpfully reviews the debates surrounding food aid and the changes in policy by the major donors—the United States, the European Union, Japan, Canada, and Australia, generally in that order—that have led to a decline in overall aid since the mid-1980s and a trend toward more emergency assistance. Food aid flows bilaterally from donors to recipients but also increasingly goes through the UN World Food Program and through nongovernmental organizations such as churches. The main issues of contention are whether food aid should be used to advance economic development goals, as envisioned by U.S. policies; whether aid levels should depend on supplies from donor countries, which raises the cost and sometimes causes delays in delivery; whether donated food should be sold or given away; the extent to which food aid should include genetically modified products; and how aid should be coordinated from a growing list of donors, which now includes China, India, and South Korea.

Why Adjudicate? Enforcing Trade Rules in the WTO. BY CHRISTINA L. DAVIS. Princeton University Press, 2012, 344 pp. $35.00.

The creation during the past two decades of a formal mechanism for settling trade disputes at the World Trade Organization represents a positive, if quiet, development in the global economy. Davis examines the circumstances that lead countries to choose the expensive and time-consuming effort of taking a dispute to the WTO, as opposed to resolving matters through bilateral negotiations. She analyzes complaints made by 81 countries, focusing in detail on the United States, which has registered the largest number of complaints (followed by the European Union, Canada, and Brazil), and on Japan, the world's second-largest national economy during the period Davis studied. Two cases get particular attention: the dispute over whether Boeing and Airbus have received unfair or illegal subsidies from the U.S. and European governments and Japan's numerous complaints about U.S. anti-dumping tariffs, especially on steel products. Davis finds that in democracies, public and legislative pressures play an important role in the decision to file a complaint and that taking a case to the WTO tends to defuse domestic political pressures by signaling that the government takes the dispute seriously.

Oil and Governance: State-Owned Enterprises and the World Energy Supply. EDITED BY DAVID G. VICTOR, DAVID R. HULTS, AND MARK THURBER. Cambridge University Press, 2012, 1,034 pp. $150.00.

This book is built around case studies of 15 state-owned oil companies, which together account for nearly 50 percent of global oil production and for 56 percent of the world's proven conventional oil reserves. Its aim is to evaluate the performance of these companies in the exploration, development, refinement (where relevant), and distribution of oil and gas. The authors give grades to all 15 companies, with Norway's and Brazil's getting the highest marks and those of Iran, Kuwait, and Nigeria getting the lowest, and analyze how the states govern and monitor their oil firms. As the authors note, in some countries, state-owned oil companies are expected to accomplish many other tasks, such as providing (or saving) foreign exchange and offering jobs to relatives of the political elite. For that reason, they often have goals other than profit maximization.

Military, Scientific, and Technological

LAWRENCE D. FREEDMAN

The Last Full Measure: How Soldiers Die in Battle. BY MICHAEL STEPHENSON. Random House, 2012, 480 pp. $28.00.

Soldaten: On Fighting, Killing, and Dying. BY SÖNKE NEITZEL AND HARALD WELZER. TRANSLATED BY JEFFERSON CHASE. Knopf, 2012, 448 pp. $30.50.

Why They Die: Civilian Devastation in Violent Conflict. BY DANIEL ROTHBART AND KARINA V. KOROSTELINA. University of Michigan Press, 2011, 224 pp. $70.00.

The NBC television show *Stars Earn Stripes*, co-hosted by the retired U.S. general and one-time presidential candidate Wesley Clark, purports to put minor celebrities through the harsh realities of war. These

books represent a corrective to the conceit the show peddles, that soldiering is simply about drills, endurance, and shooting straight.

Stephenson's thoughtful, well-compiled survey begins with ancient combat and concludes with twenty-first-century wars, although it is dominated by the American Civil War and the two world wars. He reminds readers of how many ways it is possible to get killed in war: by blunt and sharp instruments, a variety of projectiles, toxic substances, disease, and becoming trapped in vehicles and buildings. Death rarely results from straightforward fights between equals; it is most often caused by distant firepower or by booby traps and mines left by hidden enemies, such as the improvised explosive devices that were a major source of casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq. There is an arbitrariness to war that soldiers learn in combat, as one falls while another lives. "It was bad form to weep long for a fallen buddy," recalled the writer William Manchester, who served in the U.S. Marines in World War II. "We moved on, each of us inching along the brink of his own extinction."

Stephenson relies on the testimony of those who have lived through war to convey how men become accustomed to living with death and can even get a thrill from the killing. In *Soldaten*, Neitzel and Welzer draw from an even more immediate source: a trove of transcripts of surreptitiously recorded conversations among German soldiers who were taken prisoner by the British during World War II. The conversations are gripping and terrifying, laced with boasts and black humor. The most compelling ones focus on killing, especially of civilians. The German soldiers talk casually of killings as reprisals, as a way of dealing with unwanted prisoners, as part of the effort to exterminate the Jewish people, and as something done just for fun. Even when they express a degree of revulsion at the mass slaughter of Jews, the soldiers' chief complaint is that it is a waste of resources and could create a risk of retribution. The authors' commentary is at times overly psychological, but in general it is helpful, providing corroborative evidence when available and drawing attention to other relevant studies.

There is even more psychological analysis in Rothbart and Korostelina's exploration of why war kills so many civilians. This is an important topic, and the authors have some interesting things to say, using as case studies the deportation of the Tatars from Crimea in 1944, the 1994 Rwandan genocide, Israel's strikes against Lebanon in 2006, and the U.S. war in Iraq. But the book is ultimately an antiwar polemic masquerading as social science. They are so bound up in how "rigid identities," "dualities of virtue and vice," and the "normative framing of group differences" make it possible for civilians to be treated as demonic "others" (hardly news) that they seem unaware that they themselves use crude caricatures to describe mainstream views about how armed forces operate and are used. "We seek to smash the false scandal that is the militarist framing of warfare," Rothbart and Korostelina proclaim. The confusing use of "false" in that statement is a good example of what happens when academics produce slogans.

Black April: The Fall of South Vietnam, 1973–1975. BY GEORGE J. VEITH. Encounter Books, 2012, 456 pp. $29.95.

In this first half of what is to be a two-part inquiry into why North Vietnam was able

to defeat the South, Veith examines the military encounters of the last stages of the war. (The second volume will consider the war's politics and diplomacy.) Veith's intensive research and interviews, which make use of Vietnamese as well as American sources, yield a level of detail that is a bit overwhelming and likely to deter all but the most enthusiastic readers. The book is nonetheless a service to military history, for no one has produced nearly as thorough an account of these events. Veith argues that the South Vietnamese army was unfairly blamed for its own defeat and demonstrates that its incompetence was overstated. Although he accepts that senior South Vietnamese commanders made mistakes, he believes that the real reasons for the South's defeat were North Vietnam's failure to abide by the Paris peace accords and the United States' failure to provide the South Vietnamese with the material support they deserved.

Six Months in 1945: FDR, Stalin, Churchill, and Truman—From World War to Cold War. BY MICHAEL DOBBS. Knopf, 2012, 448 pp. $28.95.

Unlike most historians of the Cold War's origins, who tend to concentrate on the dreadful bloodletting that marked the final stages of World War II, Dobbs begins with the conference at Yalta, where Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin met to plan the fate of postwar Europe. The occasion was touched with melancholy, as the visibly ailing Roosevelt attempted to show that he could still be the master of events and Churchill struggled to preserve the British Empire even though he knew its moment was passing. The book ends with Hiroshima. By that point, the Soviets' behavior in the territories they had taken over from the Nazis had already alerted the Americans and the British to the likely emptiness of Stalin's promises at Yalta. Of course, the United States would have used the atom bomb against Japan even had there not been a growing rift between the East and the West, but the rift added to the bomb's significance. There are no startling revelations in this book, but Dobbs is a gifted writer. His characterizations of powerful men are well judged and rounded, as are his evaluations of the fateful choices they faced.

The United States

WALTER RUSSELL MEAD

Brigham Young: Pioneer Prophet. BY JOHN G. TURNER. Belknap Press, 2012, 512 pp. $35.00.

Heralded as a seer and prophet, reviled as a murderer and polygamist, Brigham Young is one of the most remarkable figures in U.S. history. After the founder of Mormonism, Joseph Smith, was lynched by a mob in Missouri, Young rallied the stricken Mormons and organized their mass migration to Utah, where he defeated or defied Native American tribes, internal rivals, and a series of U.S. presidents as he built and defended his empire. For more than 20 years, Young labored to forge the unruly population of Utah into a united people; when he died, in 1877, he did so with the knowledge that the mark he had made on the American West would endure. Turner's portrait of this unique American figure is balanced, thoughtful, and readable. It is a book that no student of the American West can afford to ignore.

Philanthropy in America: A History. BY OLIVIER ZUNZ. Princeton University Press, 2011, 396 pp. $29.95.

Organized philanthropy was one of the most distinctive features of American life in the twentieth century yet is rarely studied as such. That is the ambitious and important task Zunz set for himself in this substantive book. Zunz is at his strongest when examining philanthropy as an instrument with which the Progressive movement of the early twentieth century reshaped the nation in an effort to provide support for the movement's best causes (public health, mass mobilization, political reform) as well as its worst (eugenics and segregation). Zunz also shows how World War I led to national efforts to harness and rationalize the giving impulse and imbue philanthropy as a whole with a patriotic character. *Philanthropy in America* is particularly insightful regarding the legal basis of philanthropy, exploring how court battles and legal reforms have either encouraged or checked the growth of giving to causes for more than a hundred years. As the story approaches the present day, it becomes quite complex, and Zunz sometimes loses the thread of the narrative. Nevertheless, this is an excellent resource for those interested in philanthropy and its place in American life.

Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy. BY ANDREW PRESTON. Knopf, 2012, 832 pp. $37.50.

Wide ranging, deeply researched, and clearly expressed, Preston's history of the influence of religion on U.S. foreign policy, from Colonial times through the Obama administration, is a landmark in the field of American foreign policy studies. Religion

has influenced U.S. foreign policy in many ways: the personal convictions of U.S. presidents and other leaders, the political power of religious organizations, and the public voices of religious thinkers and leaders, such as Reinhold Niebuhr and Billy Graham, have all had an impact on U.S. policy choices. Preston links the theological convictions of men such as Abraham Lincoln, William McKinley, the two Roosevelts, Harry Truman, and Dwight Eisenhower to the policy choices they made. His analysis demonstrates that religious influence has hardly been limited to the political right: liberal and even radical approaches to foreign policy have also reflected religious ideas and lobbying. As in any work of this scope, it is impossible for Preston to get everything right or address every issue. But his book sets a standard for investigations into this subject that future scholars will struggle to match.

Confront and Conceal: Obama's Secret Wars and Surprising Use of American Power. BY DAVID E. SANGER. Crown, 2012, 496 pp. $28.00.

Sanger is one of the leading national security reporters in the United States, and this astonishingly revealing insider's account of the Obama administration's foreign policy process is a triumph of the genre. Sanger finds much to admire in President Barack Obama's ideals and some of the decisions Obama has made, but he paints an unsettling picture of a White House perplexed by Afghanistan, confused by the dilemma of humanitarian intervention, and thrown off balance by the Arab Spring. Yet Sanger's most telling criticism is that Obama has not used the bully pulpit to explain his foreign policy and its goals to the nation and the world. The United States may not be winning many wars these days, but it is clearly producing some very good journalists, as well as a host of senior officials who seem to think that long, frank conversations with reporters do not in any way conflict with their duty to the nation. One wonders how today's journalists would have reported on the Lincoln and Roosevelt administrations at war and whether those presidents would have appreciated aides who chose an energetic reporter as a confidant.

Western Europe

ANDREW MORAVCSIK

The Myth of the Muslim Tide: Do Immigrants Threaten the West? BY DOUG SAUNDERS. Vintage, 2012, 208 pp. $15.00.

Fortress Europe: Dispatches From a Gated Continent. BY MATTHEW CARR. New Press, 2012, 304 pp. $27.95.

The topic of Muslim immigration resonates among those who indulge nostalgic nationalism, religious prejudice, or even right-wing extremism—but also among those with an understandable fear of sudden social change. It is a subject ready-made for sensationalist journalists, resulting in a public debate poisoned by misinformation. Against that tide, Saunders has written a must-read takedown of anti-Muslim conservatives, demonstrating that their major claims are simply false. He debunks scaremongering about an emergent Muslim majority and disproves the notions that Islamic culture is impossible to assimilate and that most Muslim immigrants hold violent anti-Western views. Those slanders resemble the ones directed a century ago at Irish, Jewish, and Balkan newcomers, some

of whom also had large families, required their women to be covered, and held heterodox religious beliefs that included some anti-Western ideologies. Today, Saunders concludes, the ideological clashes that matter most are taking place within Islam, and the central imperative is to create more economic and political opportunities for Muslim newcomers—an area in which Western governments have as much responsibility as the immigrants themselves.

Contrary to nativist alarmism, Europe is not flooded with immigrants, Muslim or otherwise. In fact, the disappearance of internal border checks within most of the European Union, domestic political pressure to restrict immigration, and heightened concerns about security during the past decade have led the countries on Europe's edges to seal their borders more tightly. Carr argues that this combination of internal liberalization and external hardening has increased criminal, abusive, and often deadly human trafficking, while only modestly reducing immigration. The unique virtue of the book lies in Carr's reporting from the brutal frontiers of the new Europe: Ukrainian border towns where illegal trafficking thrives, Spanish territories in Morocco where would-be immigrants are shot dead or left to die in the Sahara after attempting to scale razor-wire fences, Italian and Maltese islands where overfilled boatloads of Africans drown by the hundreds. One can understand why Carr sympathizes with these outsiders, but his advocacy is sometimes overwrought. Criticizing European leaders as fascist or racist sometimes obscures his more measured proposals for temporary work arrangements, pathways to citizenship for illegal immigrants, nuanced changes in visa requirements, respect for basic human rights, and solutions to Europe's demographic deficit.

Good Italy, Bad Italy: Why Italy Must Conquer Its Demons to Face the Future. BY BILL EMMOTT. Yale University Press, 2012, 304 pp. $30.00.

Nearly all books on Italy draw the same dichotomy between the saint and the sinner. Italy's good qualities include its art, beauty, warmth, family values, individual creativity, and sparkling postwar economic record. Bad Italy is a land of bureaucracy, legalism, hierarchy, corruption, violence, and present-day economic doldrums, all abetted by irresponsible and self-dealing politicians. This book is not the most nuanced, well-informed, or original such analysis to appear in recent years. Still, Emmott—a former editor of *The Economist* who raised eyebrows a decade ago by questioning former Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's fitness for leadership on the magazine's cover—writes clearly and succinctly. His bottom line: the current crisis could purge Italy of its evil dealings and spur labor, budgetary, and regulatory reforms. This is precisely the agenda the current prime minister, Mario Monti, is pursuing today. Yet the absence of a fine-grained analysis of Italian politics, society, and culture leaves the reader with little insight into exactly how this plan can succeed. In the end, as the book's subtitle suggests, the reader is left with little more than a religious metaphor to point the way forward for this lovely but exasperating nation.

My Life in Politics. BY JACQUES CHIRAC. TRANSLATED BY CATHERINE SPENCER. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 352 pp. $30.00.

Once admitted to an exalted and privileged

circle, French politicians enjoy extraordinarily long and full careers. Chirac started his in 1950 on the streets of Paris, handing out copies of the communist daily *L'Humanité*, and ended it in 2007 as a Gaullist president of the French Republic. True to his reputation, he comes across as likable, unpretentious, and intelligent. He describes with equal charm and ease his first sexual experience, the intricacies of European agricultural policies, and the pettiness of former French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. But Chirac's story often seems like not much more than a series of excuses for why he achieved so little. During his first term as prime minister, in the 1970s, he was hamstrung by Giscard. In the 1980s, the Socialists cynically introduced proportional representation to strengthen the extreme right and undermine Chirac's Gaullist party. Chirac then "cohabited" as prime minister with a Socialist president, François Mitterrand. In the 1990s, he achieved the presidency himself only to rule over a motley coalition of conservatives and blunt the ambition of his rising successor, Nicolas Sarkozy. As with most political memoirists, Chirac portrays his motives throughout his struggles as uniformly noble and pure.

The Political Construction of Business Interests: Coordination, Growth, and Equality. BY CATHIE JO MARTIN AND DUANE SWANK. Cambridge University Press, 2012, 328 pp. $99.00 (paper, $31.99).

In the United States, it is widely assumed that businesses do not and should not cooperate with one another, let alone with unions or governments, to provide public goods such as education or worker training. Yet in many of the world's most competitive economies, notably Denmark, Germany, and other northern European countries, most businesses reject the pure free-market ideal and band together to support government interventions of this kind in order to promote national competitiveness. In this detailed analysis, Martin and Swank trace this cooperative attitude to the existence of centralized business associations able to discipline their members in support of common projects. Such associations emerged nearly a century ago and have survived not because business leaders in northern Europe are intrinsically socialist but because in multiparty parliamentary systems, businesspeople struck a mutually beneficial bargain with politicians. They accepted the institutional constraints of robust government regulation in exchange for a seat at the policymaking table. There is a fundamental lesson here: the preferences of private companies are determined by social choices, not by the disembodied logic of markets. With a sound constitutional structure and proper leadership, a government can help shape how markets work, along with businesses and citizens—to the benefit of all.

Western Hemisphere

RICHARD FEINBERG

Export Pioneers in Latin America. EDITED BY CHARLES SABEL, EDUARDO FERNÁNDEZ-ARIAS, RICARDO HAUSMANN, ANDRÉS RODRÍGUEZ-CLARE, AND ERNESTO STEIN. Inter-American Development Bank and David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies, 2012, 326 pp. Free online.

The traditional pessimism regarding Latin American economies is rapidly fading, and

this high-quality collection of 11 success stories helps explain why. U.S. consumers have grown accustomed to good-value wines from Chile, beautiful flowers from Colombia, nutritious avocados from Mexico, and well-engineered Embraer jets from Brazil. These case studies trace the birth and growth of the dynamic industries that produce these goods, placing special emphasis on the helping hands of governments and on the self-interested cooperation among local firms. As the strong overview by Sabel underscores, governments can assist in basic research and patent protection, offer tax incentives and targeted credits, ensure quality and safety standards, and promote the "country brand." Rather than destroy one another through competition, local firms can band together to lobby national and foreign governments for favorable treatment. Oddly, the volume understates the vital role often played by international investors in transferring new technologies and offering access to global markets: the Spanish firm Torres was instrumental in modernizing Chilean wineries, a U.S. scientist revolutionized the Colombian flower industry, and Israeli technicians assisted Mexican avocado growers.

Care Work and Class: Domestic Workers' Struggle for Equal Rights in Latin America. BY MERIKE BLOFIELD. Penn State University Press, 2012, 200 pp. $64.95.

The recent history of Latin America is, in part, the stirring story of the political and legal inclusion of an ever-widening array of social groups that have seized opportunities created by democratic openings. As Blofield incisively chronicles, until recently, household servants and nannies, who compose 15 percent of the economically active female population in Latin America, were systematically denied basic labor protections. But in country after country, their advocates have improved their lot by making good use of democratic processes. Local conditions have defined the debates: in Bolivia, the campaign on behalf of domestic workers was framed as a continuation of the struggle for the rights of indigenous people, while in Costa Rica, advocates successfully appealed to the nation's pride in its outstanding human rights record. Nevertheless, executive enforcement of new legislation often lags, ministries of labor lack adequate resources, and discriminatory laws remain in place in many countries. Significantly, in 2011, the International Labor Organization called on all its member states to honor the rights of domestic workers, bolstering the activists' cause and pressuring governments to do better on this crucial issue.

Tijuana Dreaming: Life and Art at the Global Border. EDITED BY JOSH KUN AND FIAMMA MONTEZEMOLO. Duke University Press, 2012, 424 pp. $94.95 (paper, $26.95).

Planet Taco: A Global History of Mexican Food. BY JEFFREY M. PILCHER. Oxford University Press, 2012, 320 pp. $27.95.

An eclectic anthology of critical cultural studies, *Tijuana Dreaming* brings to life the tumultuous history of the border town's shifting identity: the Prohibition-era booze-and-brothel magnet adjacent to San Diego, the late-twentieth-century booming free-trade zone of globalized assembly plants, and, most recently, the bloody site of today's horrific drug-war violence. Some contributions are pedantic, and there is no balanced assessment of

the region's economic progress, but the volume's overall high quality makes for a stimulating, if sometimes dense, read. Humberto Félix Berumen provides lucid "snapshots" of the diverse interpretations of Tijuana: as a paradise of illicit pleasures, as a border melting pot, and as a symbol of cultural postmodernism. Well-crafted essays by Teddy Cruz and Tito Alegría take the reader for a drive through the heterogeneous neighborhoods of San Diego and Tijuana, arguing that despite the tens of millions of border crossings per year, the contiguous cities are far apart socially and economically. Lucía Sanromán, Jennifer Insley-Pruitt, and Ejival expertly interpret, respectively, Tijuana's vibrant arts, literary, and music scenes. Luis Humberto Crosthwaite's poetic essay captures the frustrations and paranoia produced among Mexicans by the behavior of U.S. Department of Homeland Security guards at border crossings.

Pilcher's *Planet Taco* tackles one of the central debates in *Tijuana Dreaming*: Can there be an "authentic" Mexico in the context of mass migrations and rapid global economic and cultural change? Skeptical of nationalist claims, Pilcher, a prominent food historian at the University of Minnesota, argues that prior to the Spanish conquest, there was no such thing as "Mexican cuisine." Rather, European explorers and colonists encountered an array of empires and tribes, each boasting its own rich culinary tradition. From the outset, indigenous traditions blended with cosmopolitan ingredients and recipes. A similarly refreshing fusion also drives the *nueva cocina* (new Mexican cooking) of such renowned contemporary chefs and restaurateurs as Patricia Quintana, Mark Miller, and Richard Sandoval. Pilcher's proper emphasis on regional cuisines enables him to rescue the Tex-Mex taco from those elite Mexicans (often based in Mexico City) who reject it as a commercial invention: in fact, Tex-Mex cooking evolved organically in the border region, combining North American ingredients with Mexican sensibilities. Viewing food as a force of history, Pilcher imagines that "the thin edge of a taco may one day help bring down the militarized border."

Seeking Peace in El Salvador: The Struggle to Reconstruct a Nation at the End of the Cold War. BY DIANA VILLIERS NEGROPONTE. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 258 pp. $90.00.

In time for the 20th anniversary of the end of El Salvador's decadelong civil war, Negroponte has written a detailed and nuanced account of the negotiations that led to peace. She begins with a good summary of the scholarship on the causes of the war, which the opposition leader Guillermo Ungo succinctly described as a combination of social inequality and authoritarian politics. In the 1960s and 1970s, demands from the peaceful opposition were met by government repression; the result was revolution. Skipping over the war itself, the book focuses on the dynamics of the peace process. Negroponte argues convincingly that success resulted from a confluence of circumstances: with the end of the Cold War, the United States and the Soviet Union lost interest in fueling a proxy fight; the Salvadoran government and the guerrillas had fought to a "hurting stalemate," in which neither had any prospect of military victory; and the negotiations were aided by skillful external mediators, especially the UN diplomat Álvaro de Soto. Negroponte notes that

the United States went from unabashedly advocating military victory for the Salvadoran armed forces during the Reagan years to earnestly seeking a negotiated peace under President George H. W. Bush. Even then, Washington was by no means a neutral mediator and constantly pressured de Soto on the Salvadoran government's behalf. But the United States played a crucial role in pushing the government to accept an agreement with the rebels that forced the military out of politics—a necessary condition for Salvadoran democracy.

WILLIAM M. LEOGRANDE

Eastern Europe and Former Soviet Republics

ROBERT LEGVOLD

Roads to the Temple: Truth, Memory, Ideas, and Ideals in the Making of the Russian Revolution, 1987–1991. BY LEON ARON. Yale University Press, 2012, 496 pp. $40.00.

It might seem oxymoronic to speak of shining moments during the waning years of the Soviet Union, but Aron more than justifies the description with a stunning portrait of the intellectual and moral revolution that burst forth between 1987 and 1991. In those years, the country experienced an unbinding of conscience, a gimlet-eyed confrontation with the lies told and lived, a quest to define a fairer and more virtuous relationship between the individual and the state—ferment swept across all of political, cultural, and intellectual life. Drawing material from a rich archive of newspapers, novels, memoirs, and magazines, Aron skillfully captures the vastness and intensity of this transfiguration of ideas, which he argues played a larger role in the Soviet system's undoing than the material and structural factors that others see as the primary explanations. But Aron's account is less convincing when it comes to explaining why the soul-searching of those heady days later mutated into something more diffuse and less compelling.

Stalin's General: The Life of Georgy Zhukov. BY GEOFFREY ROBERTS. Random House, 2012, 400 pp. $30.00.

With good reason, many military historians consider Georgy Zhukov to have been the greatest general of World War II. No other military leader played so central a role in so many battles that determined the war's outcome, from the defense of Leningrad and Stalingrad to the conquest of Germany. Zhukov made misjudgments in some campaigns, but as Roberts details, he had few, if any, peers when it came to his instincts during complex strategic situations, his capacity to size up and mold the forces under his command, and his mastery of large-scale military actions, such as Operation Bagration, in 1944, in which 2.4 million Soviet troops, 5,200 tanks, and 36,000 artillery pieces sent the Germans reeling back across Europe. Even more remarkable was Zhukov's ability to survive in the Soviet system, a tale well told in this compact biography. Stalin spared him from a purge of senior officers in the 1930s only to cast him out after the war, fearing that Zhukov had become too glorified. Zhukov returned as minister of defense under Nikita Khrushchev, only to fall from grace once more, in 1958. Yet

today, sanctified once again by Russia's new leaders, his imposing statue now stands near the entrance to Red Square.

Hungary: Between Democracy and Authoritarianism. BY PAUL LENDVAI. Columbia University Press, 2012, 288 pp. $35.00.

Lendvai, a Hungarian-born veteran Austrian journalist, paints a discouraging and alarming picture of Hungary. For those who assume that the country, safely sheltered in the European Union and NATO, is well on the way to democratic stability and western European–style liberalism, this book will come as a bit of a shock. Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's 2010 electoral victory, Lendvai writes, "has put an end to the liberal democracy existing in Hungary since 1990 and has smoothed the path to a populist autocracy." In Lendvai's eyes, the willful, power-hungry Orbán has evolved from a dynamic leader into a calculating nationalist bent on closing off democratic options and ready to exploit anti-Semitism and anti-Roma sentiment. Although Lendvai's indictment is sharpest against Hungary's current leader, he makes plain that the corruption and economic recklessness of earlier governments did their part to bring about the country's degradation. Not surprisingly, Lendvai's assessment has kicked up more than a little dust in Hungary.

Russian Citizenship: From Empire to Soviet Union. BY ERIC LOHR. Harvard University Press, 2012, 288 pp. $59.95.

Borders are not merely lines on a map patrolled in the real world by guards and customs officials. They also embody the rules and practices that determine who falls under a state's jurisdiction, with what rights and obligations, and who gets to come and go—and on what terms. In this careful, economical history, Lohr demonstrates that Russia is not the eternally immured nation it has seemed for much of its history, with the Soviet Union only its most extreme version. Even before Peter the Great, but especially after the Great Reforms of the 1860s, Russia's efforts to modernize led to a patchwork approach to immigration, emigration, and naturalization. Lohr effortlessly guides readers through the complex evolution of the rules for determining who was a Russian citizen as the expanding empire engulfed foreign peoples. In this story, the Soviet Union is the outlier, both because of the thick walls the Communists erected and because they based citizenship policy on class, rather than on ethnicity or place of birth. Over the centuries, however, Russia's Jews were the policy's most consistent victims.

The Soviet Biological Weapons Program: A History. BY MILTON LEITENBERG AND RAYMOND A. ZILINSKAS. Harvard University Press, 2012, 960 pp. $55.00.

In April 1972, the Soviet Union signed an international treaty banning the development, production, use, and retention of biological weapons. That same year, Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev signed a decree vastly expanding the country's efforts to develop and weaponize bacterial and viral pathogens. Before it ostensibly ended a year after the fall of the Soviet Union, the program constituted the longest and largest of its kind, involving as many as 65,000 scientists, engineers, technicians, and support staff, spread across a maze of civilian research centers, ministries, and agencies. Its products included more than a dozen vaccine-resistant strains, including

one that would induce "an illness similar to multiple sclerosis, but with quick results." All of this was clearly in violation of the 1972 treaty and thus regularly denied by Soviet officials until the very end. Leitenberg and Zilinskas lay out the details in this massive volume, which explores every dimension of the program: its technical aspects, what U.S. and British intelligence knew about it, the role of Warsaw Pact allies, the proliferation risk, and how it compared to the Soviet chemical weapons program. Still, they stress how much cannot be known, including all that remains behind the Russian Ministry of Defense's sealed doors and lips.

Middle East

JOHN WATERBURY

The Iranian Nuclear Crisis: A Memoir. BY SEYED HOSSEIN MOUSAVIAN. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2012, 600 pp. $49.95 (paper, $19.95).

From 1997 until 2005, Mousavian was Iran's lead negotiator in talks between the Islamic Republic and the international community over Iran's nuclear program. But he broke with the government of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, which then forced him out and accused him of espionage. He left Iran and took a position as a research scholar at Princeton University. Mousavian has produced an analysis of the situation free of hyperbole or bombast that contrasts the bargaining strategies of Iran's pragmatists, of whom Mousavian is a proponent, and its hard-liner "principlists," represented by Ahmadinejad. Despite his political persecution, Mousavian is a staunch defender of Iran's basic goal of mastering the nuclear fuel cycle, and his book leaves the reader with the strong impression that the West is not dealing with a set of messianic lunatics in Tehran. He laments that the United States and other Western powers have made demands of Iran that go beyond the requirements of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. While conceding some Iranian deceptions, he argues that they were justified because Iran was denied the technical support guaranteed by the treaty. Like other observers, he suspects that what the United States really seeks in Iran is regime change, not an agreement on the nuclear issue.

The Twilight War: The Secret History of America's Thirty-Year Conflict With Iran. BY DAVID CRIST. Penguin Press, 2012, 656 pp. $36.00.

Crist plumbs some declassified documents on U.S.-Iranian relations, but if his book reveals any secrets, they hardly jolt the reader upright. The book strings together a series of vignettes bereft of a master narrative, hopping between naval encounters in the Persian Gulf and policy developments in Washington. As a result, the whole is less than the sum of its parts. Crist nicely captures the surreal nature of the policy world in Washington by noting the outcomes that the George W. Bush administration considered acceptable in Iran: either regime change or an Iranian decision to end the country's nuclear program, cut its ties with Hezbollah, become a democracy, and acquiesce to U.S. goals in the Middle East. The book traces the mostly Iranian initiatives for a "grand bargain" with the West and the Bush administration's decision to eschew that course in favor of destabilization and

regime change. U.S. President Barack Obama's search for dialogue has not allayed the fears of Iran's hard-liners that Bush's objectives still prevail in Washington.

Obama and the Middle East: The End of America's Moment? BY FAWAZ A. GERGES. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, 304 pp. $28.00.

Surveying U.S. Middle East policy since the era of Franklin Roosevelt, Gerges sees a constant tussle between "regionalists," who are highly sensitive to the peculiarities of the Middle East, and "globalists," whose approach to the region has stressed the unquestioning backing of Israel, first as a Cold War ally and later as a partner in the "war on terror." The globalists have generally prevailed, never more so than during the George W. Bush years. Gerges prefers the regionalists but recognizes that President Barack Obama has not changed the balance between the two. He sees Obama's Cairo speech of 2009 as an embarrassment because the hopes it raised have gone unfulfilled. Bending to a desire for continuity in U.S. policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Obama divorced the American response to the Arab uprisings of 2011 from that conflict, despite the organic link between the two. One key premise of the book is questionable. Gerges asserts that "America's ability to act unilaterally and hegemonically has come to an end." But the United States has never had that ability, except perhaps for a very brief moment at the end of the Cold War. In reality, U.S. policy in the Middle East has been a string of frustrations interrupted by occasional successes, such as the Camp David accords and Operation Desert Storm.

Islam and the Arab Awakening. BY TARIQ RAMADAN. Oxford University Press, 2012, 256 pp. $27.95.

Ramadan, a professor of Islamic studies at the University of Oxford, is more famous for being the grandson of Hasan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood. In this book, he uses the Arab uprisings of 2011 as a pretext to revisit themes raised in his earlier writings. He hopes that contemporary Islamism can recapture values that were laid to waste by two centuries of colonialism and argues that Islamist governance can be compatible with the rule of law, equality for all citizens, universal suffrage, accountability, and the separation of powers. Secularist reformers, he fears, are less interested in those goals than in integrating the Arab world into a neoliberal world order that he rejects. His analysis of the uprisings waffles between admiration for the protesters and a suspicion that the United States had a hand in training them. Ramadan sees almost every event in recent Middle Eastern history as serving a neoliberal order that favors regional stability, corporate interests, and Israel's survival—and as the result of a neoliberal plot, a common view in the Arab world.

The Young Turks' Crime Against Humanity: The Armenian Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing in the Ottoman Empire. BY TANER AKÇAM. Princeton University Press, 2012, 528 pp. $39.50.

The book's title issues a stark indictment; the text methodically and dispassionately sustains it. In February 1914, international pressure forced the Ottomans to acquiesce to eventual self-rule for the Armenians in Anatolia's eastern provinces. The Ottomans entered World War I in order to annul

this agreement, but they feared that it would come back in some other form. According to Akçam, a Turkish historian, their preemptive "solution" was to shrink the Armenian population from around 1.3 million to around 200,000 within a few years, through deportation, starvation, and other means, including the outright murder of probably around 300,000 Armenians. Akçam claims that the Special Organization of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), the secular nationalist party of the Young Turks, handled the genocide and was abetted by Mehmet Talat Pasha, the minister of the interior. All instructions were coded, delivered by CUP emissaries, and destroyed after being read. Plausible deniability was built into the system; the CUP knew it had tracks to cover. For a layman, the argument is convincing but not airtight. It is possible to see how the evidence presented could also be spun to fit a scenario of unplanned mass carnage. But the fact that a Turkish historian with access to the Ottoman archives has written this book is of immeasurable significance.

Asia and Pacific

ANDREW J. NATHAN

Poverty Amid Plenty in the New India. BY ATUL KOHLI. Cambridge University Press, 2012, 272 pp. $28.99.

India's Reforms: How They Produced Inclusive Growth. EDITED BY JAGDISH BHAGWATI AND ARVIND PANAGARIYA. Oxford University Press, 2012, 312 pp. $49.95.

India's economic reforms of the 1980s through the first decade of this century unleashed private enterprise, encouraged foreign investment, and expanded foreign trade. The policies generated high growth but also stirred controversy over unequal wealth distribution. Kohli's scorching critique argues that a "state-business alliance" dominates Indian policymaking. The political system maintains a façade of pro-poor rhetoric and politicians reach out to disadvantaged ethnic and caste groups, but policymakers remain insulated from pressures for redistribution. Kohli calls this economic strategy "pro-business" rather than "pro-market" because it coddles big firms. To be sure, the Indian version of this strategy provides less direct support to big companies than the classic East Asian versions of China, Japan, and South Korea. But the Indian government suppresses labor activism, and its antipoverty programs do not work. The exclusion of the poor from a fair share of the benefits of economic growth helps explain why they have resorted to caste-based violence and even to the Maoist, or Naxalite, rebellion that smolders in the eastern part of the country.

Bhagwati, Panagariya, and their contributors present an alternative view based on an analysis of survey and economic data. They show that poverty has fallen among even the most disadvantaged caste and tribal groups, that the more economically open regions of the country show the greatest reductions in poverty, and that inequality is greater among individual households than across regions or between cities and the countryside, which suggests it is not the result of any structural bias in India's development strategy. Even poor voters tend to report that their economic situations have improved, and they often go along with wealthier voters in supporting

politicians who deliver growth. These findings are technically impressive. But the argument that Kohli and other critics have put forward is not that growth has made poverty worse but that it has alleviated it too little. For India to truly achieve "inclusive growth"—a term used in Bhagwati and Panagariya's subtitle and also an election slogan of the Indian National Congress, the country's ruling party—it will have to put far more resources into what Bhagwati has called "Stage 2" reforms, such as delivering better education and health services.

Double Paradox: Rapid Growth and Rising Corruption in China. BY ANDREW WEDEMAN. Cornell University Press, 2012, 272 pp. $75.00 (paper, $26.95).

Capitalism From Below: Markets and Institutional Change in China. BY VICTOR NEE AND SONJA OPPER. Harvard University Press, 2012, 456 pp. $45.00.

The politicization of prosecutions for corruption in China makes official data untrustworthy, but Wedeman has still found plausible ways to assess different types of corruption and their frequency. Starting in the 1990s, privatization transferred public assets into private hands, and the officials guiding that process exacted a price. As the transfer process peaked, that type of corruption tailed off. Much of what now goes on in China is not "degenerative corruption," which eats away at an economy, but "transactive corruption," which takes place when officials and businesspeople cooperate to promote growth and consider it reasonable to share the proceeds. Despite conventional wisdom to the contrary, Wedeman contends that the Chinese Communist Party's anticorruption campaign has been effective enough to keep the party from becoming a predatory institution. He sees the country moving into a U.S.-style "progressive era" of even more effective anticorruption measures.

Nee and Opper come at the question of business-government relations in China from a different angle, but their findings converge with Wedeman's. Their main point is that the Chinese market economy was created not from above, by the state, but from below, by entrepreneurs. The state came in later, to legitimize and regulate the institutions that the economic actors created. This is not a new idea, but Nee and Opper's extensive interviews with entrepreneurs in the Yangtze Delta region give a detailed picture of how it happened. Like Wedeman, Nee and Opper find that political connections were valuable to entrepreneurs when the state began privatizing its assets and that well-connected individuals have been better able to acquire land-use rights and credit from state banks. But they argue that success in the private sector is "increasingly independent of the direct involvement of politicians." Rather, it comes from building a reputation for trustworthiness among networks of business peers.

As a society, the Chinese are still working out the norms they will use to distinguish acceptable from outrageous behavior by government officials. But on the evidence of these two works, runaway corruption may not be the Achilles' heel that the regime seems to fear and that its critics hope for.

The People's Post Office: The History and Politics of the Japanese Postal System, 1871–2010. BY PATRICIA L. MACLACHLAN. Harvard University Asia Center, 2012, 378 pp. $39.95.

Only in Japan could post-office reform

become the political fight of the decade, and this book explains why. For many years, a vast network of postmasters, running postal operations and even some welfare services out of their own premises, helped build local support bases for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. They offered state-sponsored savings accounts and life insurance policies, the investments from which the government then channeled into politically popular infrastructure projects. Critics derided the system as a symptom of Japanese bureaucratic immobilism, but would-be reformers were stymied until 2005, when the maverick LDP prime minister Junichiro Koizumi pushed through legislation that mandated the breakup of the postal system and forced it into private hands. Koizumi succeeded in part because of weakening ties between the postal old guard and elected politicians. Postmasters are now employed by private firms, but they remain a potent interest group, fighting to uphold the traditional values of small-scale community service. And they are no longer committed to the LDP, thus contributing to the new fluidity of Japanese party politics.

The Sunshine Policy: In Defense of Engagement as a Path to Peace in Korea. BY CHUNG-IN MOON. Yonsei University Press, 2012, 280 pp. $15.00.

Moon, a well-known scholar, served as an adviser to Kim Dae-jung, South Korea's president from 1998 until 2003, and to Roh Moo-hyun, who held the presidency from 2003 until 2008. The two presidents tried to thaw relations with Pyongyang, build trust, and create conditions for gradual change in the North's political and economic systems that might lead to coexistence and eventually to peaceful

unification. Moon blames U.S. President George W. Bush for disrupting those efforts before they had a chance to build on what he claims were initial successes. But to say the policy needed more time is to acknowledge that it depended on more reciprocity from the North and more strategic patience from the United States than could realistically be expected—not to mention more support from the South Korean public, which proceeded to award the presidency to a hard-liner, Lee Myung-bak, in 2008. Nevertheless, Moon explains the logic of the "sunshine policy" well and calls for its revival, making a strong case that every other option—military pressure, containment, and waiting for the regime in Pyongyang to collapse—has failed.

Mao: The Real Story. BY ALEXANDER V. PANTSOV AND STEVEN I. LEVINE. Simon & Schuster, 2012, 784 pp. $35.00.

This fine book is based on extraordinary access to Soviet archives and on documents recently published in China and the West, shedding new light on some aspects of the Chinese leader's life and career. Early on, Pantsov and Levine write, Mao Zedong was "an obedient pupil of the great Stalin." But the relationship became fraught in the late 1940s, when Stalin, chronically suspicious, thought that Mao might betray him, as had Yugoslavia's Marshal Tito—a fear dispelled only after China entered the Korean War. Emotions affected Sino-Soviet relations later, as well, when Mao's deep contempt for Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev exacerbated the growing rift between the two communist powers.

Pantsov and Levine succeed in conveying a balanced image of Mao's complex persona and revealing the contradictions in his beliefs and actions. Mao insisted that policies had to be based on investigation but rejected results that failed to conform to his vision. He claimed to follow the "mass line" but abandoned it if he believed socialism was endangered, as during the devastating famine caused by the Great Leap Forward, when Mao refused to indulge the preferences of the peasant masses, who favored restoring the practice of family farming. Mao was a radical who took enormous and destructive risks. But despite his cruel treatment of offending subordinates during the Cultural Revolution, he was enough of a realist to allow the survival of some moderates in the leadership, such as Deng Xiaoping, which aided the triumph of moderation after his death.

THOMAS P. BERNSTEIN

Africa

NICOLAS VAN DE WALLE

My First Coup d'État and Other True Stories From the Lost Decades of Africa. BY JOHN DRAMANI MAHAMA. Bloomsbury, 2012, 336 pp. $24.00.

When Ghanaian President John Atta Mills died suddenly in July, his vice president, Mahama, succeeded him. In this affecting and revealing memoir, Mahama crafts an evocative portrait of Ghana's privileged classes in the 1960s and 1970s. The son of a prominent northerner who served in the country's first government, Mahama was introduced to Afrobeat and American rock 'n' roll by some of his 19 siblings, to Charles Dickens by a series of elite Anglophone boarding schools, and to Marxism by the University of Ghana, in

Legon. The book intersperses sentimental personal reminiscences with descriptions of the country's ineluctable economic and political decline, from independence in 1956 through the repeated military coups of the next two decades, during which Ghana went from being one of Africa's richest countries to being an economic basket case. Ghanaian readers might see this memoir by a current officeholder as a political instrument; others will mainly enjoy the well-crafted anecdotes and images of an Africa that no longer exists.

China and Africa: A Century of Engagement. BY DAVID H. SHINN AND JOSHUA EISENMAN. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012, 544 pp. $69.95.

The increased Chinese attention to Africa has been one of the region's big stories during the last decade, not least because it seemed to come just as the West was losing interest in the continent. Major investments by China's state-controlled companies have been accompanied by the arrival of the million or so Chinese citizens working in Africa today and by a major diplomatic initiative that has sent numerous high-level Chinese government missions to African countries in recent years. Shinn and Eisenman's book usefully situates these developments in a broad historical context, showing important areas of continuity with earlier Sino-African links. Their analysis does not break new ground in explaining Chinese motivations or the impact of Chinese policy on Africa, but it does describe in comprehensive detail the diplomatic, commercial, and security facets of the new Chinese presence, with sections on every African country. The book is particularly strong when clarifying the evolution of Chinese diplomatic and security strategies in the region.

Sudan, South Sudan, and Darfur: What Everyone Needs to Know. BY ANDREW NATSIOS. Oxford University Press, 2012, 280 pp. $74.00 (paper, $16.95).

South Sudan: From Revolution to Independence. BY MATTHEW LERICHE AND MATTHEW ARNOLD. Hurst, 2012, 320 pp. £19.99.

Among the many recent books on Sudan's enormous and persistent potential for violent conflict, these two deserve special notice. Natsios provides a clear and dispassionate general introduction to the country's history and politics, designed for the lay reader. Intimately involved in the subregion as a special envoy to Darfur during the George W. Bush administration, Natsios sheds some light on the decision-making process in the Bush White House as it grappled with the Darfur crisis and the negotiations that eventually led to an independent South Sudan. He reports that Secretary of State Colin Powell and his successor, Condoleezza Rice, both took a personal interest in Africa and were instrumental in proposing ambitious U.S. policies in the region. The book's main achievement, though, is to succinctly explain Sudan's history of conflict and violence, with its roots in the colonial era. Natsios argues that economic and political power in Khartoum was historically concentrated in the hands of a narrow elite drawn from three small Arab tribes from the Nile River valley of northern Sudan, who composed only about five percent of the country's population and favored the populations of their region and Khartoum. The resulting inequalities have spurred

grievances elsewhere that the central government has responded to with prevarications and violence.

In the first comprehensive analysis of the world's youngest state, LeRiche and Arnold explore the role those government policies played in leading to the birth of South Sudan. They examine the roots of the civil wars that raged for years between southern Sudanese guerrillas and the Sudanese army and chronicle the protracted negotiations that resulted in the South's secession and independence last year. The book focuses mostly on the past, although the later chapters suggest reasons for pessimism about South Sudan's future. LeRiche and Arnold make clear that only two things have historically held together the many different ethnic groups in the new country: the charismatic leadership of the late rebel leader John Garang, who died in a helicopter accident in 2005, and a shared distrust and anger at the authorities in Khartoum. As the two Sudans struggle over the sharing of oil resources, South Sudan's governance has already been undermined by corruption, and ethnic fault lines have quickly appeared.

The Battle of Adwa: African Victory in the Age of Empire. BY RAYMOND JONAS. Belknap Press, 2011, 432 pp. $29.95.

In March 1896, the Ethiopian army, led by Emperor Menelik II, decisively defeated the Italian army near the town of Adwa, in northern Ethiopia, just south of today's Eritrean border. As one of the very few military victories enjoyed by an indigenous people over an invading European army during the period of colonial expansion, Adwa served as a potent symbol for Third World nationalists. On a more practical level, the victory allowed Ethiopia to maintain its sovereignty even as the rest of the continent was carved up by the European powers. And it saved the Ethiopian monarchy, which would survive for another eight decades. Jonas tells the story well, aided by the presence of colorful characters, such as Menelik's fiery wife, Empress Taytu, and the Italian officers whose bumbling ensured their own defeat. Jonas has little to say about Menelik's other accomplishments as emperor, but the Adwa campaign was probably the high point of his reign, and he emerges as a crafty monarch and sharp strategist who ably manipulated the Western press in order to shape his reputation in Europe.

Letters to the Editor

Robert Lieber on the future of American power, Dustin Dehez on atomic autocracies, and others

LEADER OF THE PACK

To the Editor:

In "Hegemony and After" (July/August 2012), a review essay of Robert Kagan's *The World America Made* and of my recent book, *Power and Willpower in the American Future*, Robert Keohane does a worthy job of setting out his own views about the future of the United States' global role. But he does not offer a reliable understanding of my arguments.

Keohane takes both Kagan and me to task for a "refusal to accord due weight to multilateral institutions and material power" in assessing the U.S.-sponsored global order and for our "overconfidence in making assertions about the future." Kagan can speak for himself, but in relation to *Power and Willpower*, Keohane elides several distinctions important to understanding my work. Regarding the role of international institutions, for example, Keohane might have pointed out that his disagreement with the books reflects a fundamental divide within the community of international relations scholars and practitioners. His optimism about multilateral institutions, moreover, seems oddly out of place in light of the international community's recent failures, including its lamentable record in responding to problems in the humanitarian sphere, such as the conflicts in Syria and Sudan; the economic sphere, such as the mismanagement of finance and trade; the environmental sphere, such as climate change; and the security sphere, such as Iran and nuclear proliferation.

Keohane writes that I slighted NATO's operations in Kosovo in 1999 and Libya in 2011, but my description of both cases provides compelling evidence of the indispensability of American support and the increasing limitations of European capabilities. In doing so, I cite the authoritative testimony of then U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates documenting the inability of the Europeans to carry out their missions in Libya without the United States' provision of smart weapons; airborne refueling; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and other advanced capabilities. This is not a snub of NATO's operations but a realistic and concerned assessment of what NATO can and cannot do.

In addition, a number of Keohane's key points virtually restate the arguments of *Power and Willpower*. Keohane begins with the observation that "in the absence

of leadership, world politics suffers from collective action problems." This specific topic is fully discussed in two sections of my book. He adds that "states other than the leader have incentives to shirk their responsibilities." But in addition to noting the decline in burden sharing by NATO countries, my book also discusses numerous examples of this occurring among the emerging powers, especially the so-called BRICS—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. I include telling examples of irresponsibility regarding environmental policy, proliferation, trade, human rights, humanitarian intervention, and intellectual piracy. Keohane echoes yet another main point of my book when he argues that "in the absence of immediate threats, the public's willingness to invest in international leadership will tend to decline."

Then, after criticizing both Kagan and me for our "failure to distinguish between what is known and what is unknowable," Keohane sets out what he terms "half a dozen things relevant to the future of the U.S. global role that can now be said with confidence." Many of these observations are unexceptionable, but Keohane misses a key point captured in my book's subtitle: *Why the United States Is Not Destined to Decline*. Had I wanted to make an unqualified assertion about the United States' future, it would have been *Why the United States Will Not Decline*.

Finally, Keohane's concluding words about the strengths and weaknesses of the position of the United States and the need to "summon the political coherence and willpower to devise and implement a sustainable leadership strategy for the twenty-first century" are so close to my own thinking that they could virtually have been taken from the pages of *Power and Willpower*. I plead guilty to cautious optimism about the future of the United States, finding evidence for that position in many of the very factors Keohane mentions: its size, material capacity, ability to rebound from difficulties, demographics, openness, and innovativeness. In addition, I cite the country's lead in science and technology, its unique research universities, its entrepreneurial immigrants, the depth and breadth of its markets, its military strength, and its immense natural resources.

Since the founding of the United States, the country's experience has been one of unusual flexibility and adaptability: it has had a raucous but robust political system with both liberty and the rule of law, a record of overcoming repeated foreign and domestic crises, a slow but ultimately successful policymaking process, and a capacity for responding to grave threats with great vigor and even ferocity. These traits, observed by Alexis de Tocqueville in the 1830s and Winston Churchill in the mid-twentieth century, among others, are unique to the history and character of the United States. They do not guarantee that the country will once again overcome its considerable problems, but together with the material evidence, they provide a reasoned basis for the concluding words of *Power and Willpower*: "Much remains to be done in domestic as well as foreign policy, but the robustness of American society coupled with its unique capacities for adaptation and adjustment are likely once again to prove decisive."

ROBERT J. LIEBER

Professor of Government and International Affairs, Georgetown University

HOPE WON'T STOP THE BOMB

To the Editor:

Jacques Hymans' article "Botching the Bomb" (May/June 2012) is thought provoking, even if the only thought that comes to mind is one of bewilderment. His argument—that those countries seeking nuclear weapons today face such enormous operational challenges that they may well fail—is not totally without merit. Yet Hymans underestimates the incentives for states to push their nuclear programs through despite these problems and understates the capacity of dictatorships, in particular, to do so.

The absence of effective management structures in authoritarian states might in theory lead them to botch their nuclear programs. But so far, it hasn't. Hymans fails to provide a convincing example for his hypothesis. Sure enough, Iraq's nuclear program was piling up costs, and Saddam Hussein's frequent purges made advances more incremental than they would otherwise have been. Yet incremental as Iraq's progress was, the regime did arrive at a crucial threshold, beyond which only military action could stop it from acquiring a nuclear weapon. What Hymans fails to recognize is that authoritarian systems can afford to spend large amounts of money on such programs and accept slow progress precisely because they are not held accountable.

But the real problem with Hymans' line of argument is that it leads to deeply faulty policy prescriptions. He draws a comparison between Iraq and Libya, on the one hand, and Iran, on the other. But the bureaucratic capabilities of Iran far exceed those of Libya and Iraq combined—hardly a forgivable omission

given that Hymans' thesis rests on the assumption that all authoritarian states share inefficient management procedures. In fact, Iran has proved time and again that it has learned from the experiences of Iraq and Libya.

Moreover, Hymans' idea that too much pressure on Iran might galvanize the dictatorship into overcoming its nuclear management and organizational problems is troubling. Hymans makes this argument on the premise that in the absence of international action, the organizational challenges of Iran's program might prove too great to overcome. Therefore, he warns the United States against trying to stop Iran's nuclear program through covert actions along the lines of the Stuxnet computer worm or through a potential aerial bombing campaign. But Hymans himself knows full well that even less capable states than Iran, such as Pakistan, have advanced all the way to completing their nuclear programs, however incrementally. And he cannot ignore that it was only international action—diplomatic or otherwise—that stopped the weapons programs of Iraq, Libya, and Syria.

It is irresponsible to rule out preventive action based on the slight chance that Iran's nuclear ambitions will fail on their own. Hope is not a strategy.

DUSTIN DEHEZ
Senior Analyst, Global Governance Institute

Hymans replies:

Dustin Dehez explicitly accepts the validity of my article's central point: bad internal management has had a debilitating effect on recent nuclear weapons projects. His objection to my thesis is that if states are allowed to keep plugging away at their nuclear projects, no matter how poorly managed they are, eventually they will succeed in producing the bomb. This argument misses the point: the policy debate on this issue centers not on the possibility of a state's eventually developing nuclear weapons but on the likely time frame in which the state might do so. And in recent decades, those estimates have proved far too pessimistic, in part because the calculations have underestimated the extent to which bad administration bungles a nuclear program.

Dehez repeats the old canard that after a decade of determined efforts, Iraq made it to the point where "only military action could stop it from acquiring a nuclear weapon." Yet as I detailed in my article, Iraq's attempts in the 1980s to enrich uranium on an industrial scale were largely unsuccessful. Iraq seemed close to a nuclear weapon at the time of the Gulf War only because France and Russia had handed it a significant quantity of highly enriched uranium reactor fuel for its civil nuclear program many years earlier. Moreover, even the 1990–91 "crash program" to repurpose that fuel for nuclear bombs was an organizational disaster that the regime itself appears to have quickly lost faith in, as evidenced by the callous decision to force its top scientists to remain inside their nuclear facilities as human shields during the U.S. air campaign.

It is clear that Iran is further ahead in its nuclear work than Iraq was in the early 1990s. Still, for well over two decades, Iran's nuclear output has consistently failed to live up to the claims of the country's politicians and the best guesses of Western intelligence agencies. The most plausible explanation for Iran's underwhelming

nuclear performance to date is the rampant mismanagement visible throughout the country's industrial economy.

Dehez also claims that I understate the role that international action has played in curtailing the nuclear efforts of states such as Iraq and Libya. In fact, my article credits the international nonproliferation regime for slowing the spread of nuclear weapons since the early 1990s. But Dehez has something more radical in mind when he uses the term "international action." His letter reflects the common assumption that the harder you try to stop proliferation, the more effective you will be. Therefore, if diplomacy fails to halt a state's suspicious nuclear activities, impose sanctions. And if sanctions don't do it, start bombing. But in fact, bombing can make a bad situation worse. The basis of the preventive-strike doctrine is only a faint hope that a few air sorties will cause would-be nuclear weapons states to abandon their national pride and bow down before the foreign devils. And to quote Dehez: "Hope is not a strategy." That's why I prefer analysis.

THE DECIDER AND THE DICTATOR

To the Editor:

In "Deterrence Lessons From Iraq" (July/August 2012), Amatzia Baram presents a case study of Saddam Hussein's behavior leading up to the Iraq war to support his view that one cannot assume that leaders are rational when predicting how they will act. Ironically, Saddam made that very same miscalculation when he predicted that U.S. President George W. Bush would not begin a war with Iraq. As various studies have shown, Bush and his top advisers were susceptible to the very same types of delusions and megalomania that Baram attributes to Saddam.

Blinded by a belief in their omnipotence, Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and other top U.S. advisers ignored arguments against the war and failed to plan adequately for what would happen after Saddam's regime fell. As a result, they initiated an unnecessary war that cost tens of thousands of lives, damaged the global reputation of the United States, boosted al Qaeda's recruitment efforts, strengthened Iran's influence, and vastly increased the U.S. budget deficit. One hopes that the United States heeds Baram's lessons and realizes that they do not apply only to rulers of other countries.

STEPHEN NATHANSON

Professor of Philosophy, Northeastern University

BLUEPRINTS FOR BREAKAWAY

To the Editor:

In "The Scottish Play" (September/October 2012), Charles King briefly distinguishes the separatist movement in Scotland from that in Quebec. "The Québecois quest for independence," he writes, "involved a religious and linguistic minority seeking to secure its status against perceived English-speaking dominance." In contrast, "not only is it difficult today to define an 'ethnic Scot,' but the SNP [Scottish National Party] has understood that its greatest hope for differentiating Scotland from the rest of the United Kingdom is to embrace values, not nationality, as the region's defining principle."

But today's separatists in Quebec may not be so different from their Scottish counterparts. Thanks in part to the changes King mentions—the federal government's increased commitment to bilingualism,

economic growth, and immigration from Africa and Asia—Quebec's separatists have moved away from ethnic and linguistic arguments for independence. Instead, they have gravitated to strategies that are strikingly similar to those used by the SNP.

Since 2006, when Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, a Conservative, was elected, Québecois separatists have insisted, like the SNP, that the federal government's values are inimical to those of their region. The province's separatist party, the Parti Québécois (PQ), has argued that unlike the Harper government, an independent Quebec would take better care of its underprivileged citizens, preserve social programs, and better protect the environment—all similar arguments to those made by the SNP. Both the SNP and the PQ also assert that their new countries' foreign policies would focus on peacemaking rather then military intervention; an independent Quebec, according to Pauline Marois, the leader of the PQ, would no longer spend billions of dollars to "buy war planes and war boats."

For the last 40 years, Quebec's separatists have steadfastly railed against the central government's policies, brilliantly adjusting their criticism to the changing context. Those repeated attacks have changed most Québecois' views of Canada for the worst, although not yet to the point where they consider separation worthwhile. Quebec's federalists, meanwhile, have been singularly clumsy in their replies. King is right when he argues that "it would be a shame if the Scottish model became . . . a handbook for transforming muscular regionalism into territorial separatism"—which is why, like many Québecois who oppose separation, I follow the situation in Scotland with interest and more than a little anxiety.

ANDRÉ PRATTE
Chief Editorial Writer, La Presse

THE AMERICAN UMPIRE

To the Editor:

Barry Friedman's "Obamacare and the Court" (September/October 2012) states that by upholding the mandate that individuals buy health insurance, U.S. Chief Justice John Roberts "preserved the standing of the Court and prevented the left from making the Court's legitimacy an election issue."

Why is it only the left that has a claim on the Court's legitimacy? As the 78th Federalist Paper notes, justices were given life tenure to ensure that they would be insulated from popular opinion. Instead of obsessing about what other people think, the justices should remember that their job, as Roberts himself said at his confirmation hearings, is "to call balls and strikes" when interpreting the constitutionality of legislation.

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