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The Big Picture



Alan Curtis

When in [our] long history other great civilizations fell, it was less often from external assault than from internal decay. . . . The greatness and durability of most civilizations has been finally determined by how they have responded to these challenges from within. Ours will be no exception. —Final Report, National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence,

December 1969

Chaired by Milton Eisenhower, the presidential Violence Commission wisely prophesized the inner decay of America in the new millennium. It is not decay of our vibrant, friendly and innovative people, but of federal policy, conservative ideology and the ruling class.

Many critics, including contributors to *Patriotism, Democracy, and Common Sense* like Ambassador Joseph C. Wilson IV, have been the object of attempts at the highest levels of government to intimidate them, punish them, and label them unpatriotic. These attempts are symptomatic of America's internal decay. Ambassador Wilson was called a "true American hero" by President George H. W. Bush in 1991.

There is nothing unpatriotic or even counterproductive about questioning the government's actions, as Richard C. Leone reminds us in this book. History teaches us that bypassing public deliberation almost inevitably leads to outcomes that nations eventually regret. Looking back, there is a long list of reactions to other threats in which the absence of open debate coincided with the nation's low points. During the twentieth century, the Palmer raids after World War I, the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, the Bay of Pigs fiasco, Iran-Contra, the secret war in Honduras, and any number of other schemes went badly astray. Public deliberation involves controversy that can be painful and time consuming, but dialogue often prevents bad ideas from taking hold while broadening support for policies that are implemented.

The contributors to this book, then, are supportive of “Mr. Republican,” Ohio Senator Robert A. Taft, who said, weeks after Pearl Harbor, “Too many people desire to suppress criticism, [but] “the maintenance of the right of criticism in the long run . . . will prevent mistakes which might otherwise occur.”

Patriotism, Democracy, and Common Sense looks at failures and more promising alternatives in American foreign, national security, Middle East, economic, domestic, and inner city, media policies over recent years. As editor, I have forgone a traditional introduction. This opening section is longer, and I beg the reader’s indulgence. There is a great deal to cover and a need to pull it together in one place. Few current books try to integrate what is happening, from Baghdad and Jerusalem to Des Moines and the South Bronx.

I have asked three questions: How have present policies failed? What alternatives better fulfill America’s promise? And how can the people move the nation from failure to success?

In what follows, I have not tried to compromise out a consensus among all the distinguished authors to the thirty-nine chapters of *Patriotism, Democracy, and Common Sense*. Instead, I have organized the critiques and alternative policies selectively from contributors who have most persuaded me, filled in some gaps, integrated in material from outside sources, and added my own perspectives.

HOW HAVE PRESENT POLICIES FAILED?

In many ways, current federal policy in the United States is based on domination and misinformation.

Domination expresses the arrogance of the richest nation in history, the unchecked will of the only current superpower, the might of our high-tech military force, and the ever-widening income and wealth disparities in America that help define and reinforce our white ruling class.

Misinformation has been generated by skillful and retributive federal government communications offices in concert with a vastly resourced, private-sector, conservative ideology machine. Some American corporate media are part of the machine. Other corporate and mainstream media have not been sufficiently critical and were deferential, in particular, after September 11, when the citizenry sought direction and assurances from its leaders.

Conservative ideologist Irving Kristol has said, “What’s the point of being the greatest, most powerful nation in the world and not having an imperial role?” But policies of domination and misinformation have ill-served the American people and have failed.

What are some illustrations of the domination and misinformation identified in *Patriotism, Democracy, and Common Sense*? In national security and foreign policy, ex-

amples include the current doctrine of preemptive, unilateral force and the myth that the September 11 attacks were not preventable. In Middle East policy, illustrations include the invasion of Iraq, the torture and sexual abuse of Iraqi inmates in the prisons we have filled as rapidly as prisons back home, the false claim that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, and the misinformation that there was a link between Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. In American economic policy, examples include the class warfare declared by the rich against the rest of us, via, for example, tax breaks for the wealthy and welfare for corporations, as well as by the stealth movement of the far right to dramatically reduce, incrementally over time, federal programs that are desired and needed by the middle class, workers, and the poor. In domestic policy, illustrations include America's racially biased, "shock-and-awe," "zero-tolerance" prison building for the poor, giving the United States the highest rate of incarceration in the world—and the deceit that we don't know what works to reverse the despair of the truly disadvantaged and the shame of our inner cities. In the case of the media, domination and misinformation are evident in the consolidation of control by a few corporate media giants, in the myth that America's founders wanted our present undemocratic, corporate, commercial media system and in the smokescreen that there is a left-wing bias to mainstream media.

Consider each of these policy areas:

Failures in American Foreign and National Security Policy

American foreign and national security policy has failed to create a vision current with global realities. With such a vision, the September 11 attacks could have been prevented. The United States has been weakened by a corrupted Central Intelligence Agency, asserted a unilateral and preemptive imperialism that history has shown cannot last, experienced a mismatch between the power of our rulers and the degree to which our population has accurate information about the world, and embarked on a misguided and exorbitantly expensive Iraq adventure. It is hard to imagine actions that would generate more hatred and revenge against America for generations to come than the torture and sexual humiliation of Iraqi prisoners. America's invasion of Iraq failed to heed the admonitions of President Eisenhower in his farewell military-industrial-complex speech and squandered resources that should be used for a more sophisticated policy against al Qaeda and a more timely plan for home security.

Lack of Vision. During the Cold War, America's foreign and national security policy was focused on the containment of communism. But there has been little coherent American policy vision since the Cold War ended.

In 2001, the bipartisan U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, cochaired by former Senator Gary Hart and former Senator Warren B. Rudman, set out such a vision, predicting terrorist attacks on America and recommending a

sweeping overhaul of national security structures and policies. Later, Senators Hart and Rudman cochaired a follow-up panel convened by the Council on Foreign Relations. Little action has been taken by the American government on these recommendations, and now there is another set of crucially important recommendations, from the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks on the United States (the 9/11 Commission), to implement.

Prevention of the September 11 Attacks. Over recent decades, national security policy did not sufficiently focus on the threat of terrorism. During the last few years, first priority has been given to Star Wars missile defenses.

The White House, the intelligence agencies of the United States, law enforcement, and the military did not give the terrorist threat top priority immediately prior to September 11. The 9/11 Commission has provided a book-length chronology of failures, as have Bob Woodward of the *Washington Post* and other investigative reporters who have examined dozens of declassified documents. *Together, these failures demonstrate that the terrorist attacks were preventable.*

Here are a few of the failures:

- Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden did not blindside the United States, but were a threat discussed regularly at the highest levels of government for almost five years before the attacks, in thousands of reports that often were accompanied by urgent warnings to the White House from mid-level experts.
- While the position of national coordinator for counterterrorism originally provided immediate access to the president, the position was downgraded to deputy status by the new national security advisor in 2001, blocking direct access and helping to ensure that the president only heard from his top anti-terrorism chief until after September 11.
- In the first eight months of 2001, the administration received far more dire information than it admitted, until the 9/11 Commission forced public disclosures.
- The Associated Press has reported that White House national security leadership met formally nearly 100 times in the months prior to September 11, yet terrorism was on the agenda during only one of those sessions.
- In April and May of 2001, the president, vice president, and national security advisor received memos from the intelligence community titled “Bin Laden Planning Multiple Operations,” “Bin Laden’s Network Plans Advancing,” and “Bin Laden Threats Are Real.”
- On August 6, 2001, the president received an intelligence memo titled “Bin Laden Determined to Strike the U.S.” Senator John McCain has concluded, “Should [the August 6 memo] have raised more of an alarm bell? I think in hindsight, that’s probably true.” For example, there is no evidence that the White House put airports on heightened alert as a result of the memo. The White House did not issue a press release and did not hold a press conference with names and descriptions of suspects. The White House did not force re-

calcitrant intelligence agencies to improve the ways they shared all available information about al Qaeda threats.

- Neither President Clinton nor President Bush sought to proactively correct the paralyzing dysfunction that undermined the CIA and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the two agencies most responsible for protecting the United States from terrorists.
- On September 11, 2001, the White House national security advisor was scheduled to give a speech at Johns Hopkins University addressing “the threats and problems of today and the day after...” According to United States officials who have seen the original text, the address was designed to promote missile defense as the cornerstone of a new national security strategy and contained no mention of al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden or Islamic extremist groups. (The speech was postponed, and an edited version was given later.)
- The CIA had at least six chances to attack Osama bin Laden prior to September 11, but each time agency higher-ups blocked action.
- The director of the CIA had little contact with the president during much of the summer of 2001, when intelligence agencies, at least at lower- and mid-levels, were warning of a dire terrorist attack.
- The CIA waited until August 2001 to alert the FBI on two of the terrorists, who by then were living in the United States. The FBI was not, of course, able to locate them.
- The FBI failed to follow up on a July 2001 warning from a Phoenix agent that al Qaeda terrorists might be training in American flight schools.
- The FBI failed to understand the significance of Zacarias Moussaoui, the flight school student arrested in August 2001 and later linked to the September 11 hijackers.
- The director of the FBI and his senior deputies in Washington were not informed until after September 11 that the Phoenix and Minneapolis field offices had reported to Washington headquarters in summer 2001 that al Qaeda or other terrorists might be developing a plot involving commercial airlines.
- Prior to September 11, only about 6 percent of the FBI’s work force was assigned to counterterrorism. The Bureau has struggled to refocus itself from an interstate crime fighting organization to one that can create a counterterrorism capacity to stop unconventional foreign-based threats to security inside the United States. The reasons have included outmoded bureaucracy, outmoded intelligence collection, an aging computer system that prevented effective communication between agents and headquarters, and a severe undersupply of analysts assessing data and terror threats.
- The FBI’s counterterrorism budget was increased before September 11, and it had seventy active leads linked to Osama bin Laden ongoing in summer 2001; but it was unable to piece the leads together.

- A quicker military action by the North American Aerospace Command might have prevented American Airlines Flight 77 from crashing into the Pentagon on September 11. Commanders were in an outward, Cold War mode and not prepared to face the new generation of threats that includes hijacked planes as missiles.

The Corruption of the Central Intelligence Agency. Part of the reason why America has not created a clear and accurate post–Cold War national security policy vision is that, during the last twenty years, the CIA has become so politically corrupted and politicized that it has lost credibility. As director of the CIA in the 1980s, William Casey institutionalized politicalization, which reached its peak in 2002 when George Tenet succumbed to White House pressure to generate a report to justify a prior decision to invade Iraq. That report failed to acknowledge that little proof existed for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. In 2004, David Kay, the CIA’s chief weapons inspector, told Congress shortly before resigning, “I’m personally convinced that there were not large stockpiles of newly produced weapons of mass destruction. . . . We didn’t find the people, the documents, or the physical plants that you would expect to find if the production was going on.”

As former CIA analyst Ray McGovern points out in chapter 4, the deterioration of the agency in recent years also is illustrated by its loss of imagery-analysis capacity and by dispersal of its public media analysis capacity.

The collection and analysis of satellite and other images had been a CIA operation, but in recent years it was transferred to the Pentagon. Had the CIA possessed independent imagery analysis capacity in 2002, it might have helped show that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

In addition, contrary to popular misconceptions, most information about most countries, movements, and groups comes from “open” sources—what is said publicly—and not from intelligence acquired clandestinely. The CIA originally had a strong unit to analyze public information. For example, the unit correctly forecast the reforms of Mikhail Gorbachev in the 1980s. But this stellar, centralized media-analysis capacity was dispersed within the CIA in the 1990s. Had there been a unit of media-analysis practitioners plumbing the statements of Osama bin Laden and his chief lieutenants over the past decade, those analysts might have been able to throw helpful light on his intentions, his tactics, his supporters—and on “why they hate us.”

Force and Preemptive Multilateralism. While not a clear vision, a priority on the use of force in foreign policy has evolved among both Democrats and Republicans over the last quarter century, as America has become the world’s sole superpower. The use of force has become more unilateral—and now preemptive. The preemptive force has included torture and sexual humiliation by the American military against Iraqi prisoners, just as prisons back in the United States abound in sexual humiliation.

A dangerous imbalance has developed between use of force and use of the other tools of foreign policy—diplomacy, uncorrupted intelligence, economic development assistance, and support for democracy building in countries that genuinely are receptive at the grassroots level. Presently, there is a sixteen-to-one ratio between the budget of the Department of Defense and the budgets for all other foreign operations combined. The United States has the lowest ratio of foreign aid to gross domestic product of any of the twenty-one industrialized nations. Today, we spend \$1 billion less per year on foreign aid than during the Cold War. This at a time when one in five of the world's six billion people is living in abject poverty on less than \$1 per day in local purchasing parity, with a life expectancy of little more than forty years.

Before September 11, there was a growing list of issues around which the world united, but where America was different. A convention was passed recognizing basic rights for children all over the world; the United States was unable to sign it, whereas virtually every other country has done so. At Kyoto, global warming was recognized as threatening the future of the world; the United States found it impossible to cooperate, even though a new Pentagon report now has issued warnings on global warming. An international criminal court has been created, with the hope that it will help all nations deal with extremism, war, the Milosevics of the world, the Mugabes of this world and other dictators. Most people in Europe believe this is an advance in civilization, but the United States finds it difficult to support the court.

This unilateralism is part of the American government's attack on "Old Europe." As Lord Wallace reminds us in chapter 7, there has been a rise in anti-Europeanism led by conservatives and the extreme Christian right in America, a right allied with the government (not the people) of Israel against a peaceful Palestinian-Israeli solution. This alliance has set the tone of many American opened pages in recent years.

After September 11 and during the buildup to Iraq, America directed much of its anti-Europeanism and preemptive multilateralism at the United Nations. Across most of the world, in the words of Phyllis Bennis in chapter 9, people treasure the United Nations, even while recognizing its imperfections and need for improvement. Contrast this to Richard Perle, the American imperialist conservative who wrote, "Thank God for the death of the United Nations. Its abject failures gave us only anarchy."

In modern democracies, there seldom has been as much of a mismatch as in America today between the power of the rulers and the degree to which their populations have accurate information about the world. In a Pew Research Center poll conducted in twenty-four countries in November and December 2001, substantial majorities in many countries believed that the policies and actions of the United States were a major cause for the September 11 attacks. For example, in non-European countries, 58 percent of the respondents held this view. In the United States, only 18 percent thought

American policies were a major cause of the attacks. Most Americans were unaware of the discontinuity. For a long time, polls actually showed a majority or near majority of the American public believed that there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and that there was an absolute connection between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. Most of the rest of the world believed something quite different.

Similarly, in 2004, a Pew poll showed that majorities in almost all countries except the United States thought the war in Iraq hurt the battle against terrorism.

The Spectacular, Costly, and Inappropriate Response. Created in part by misinformation by the American government, the inward looking, preemptive, unilateral American policy made it easier for the United States to respond with spectacular, costly action—the invasion of Iraq, which also helped take care of unfinished business from the first Gulf War, based on the unsubstantiated premise that the road to Jerusalem led through Baghdad.

The balance of available evidence from the 9/11 Commission, congressional sources, executive branch officials, and investigative reporting tends to support the conclusion of former White House counterterrorism adviser Richard A. Clarke that, after September 11, 2001, the American government neglected counterterrorism because of an obsession with waging war on Iraq. In his book, *Against All Enemies*, Clarke concludes:

The administration has squandered the opportunity to eliminate al Qaeda . . . A new al Qaeda has emerged and is growing stronger, in part because of our own actions and inactions. It is in many ways a tougher opponent than the original threat we faced before September 11, and we are not doing what is necessary to make America safe from that threat.

As if anticipating Clarke, President Eisenhower, in his farewell, military-industrial-complex speech during the Cold War, warned, “Crises there may continue to be, and meeting them, whether foreign or domestic, great or small, there is a recurring temptation to feel that some spectacular and costly action could become the miraculous solution to all current difficulties.” President Eisenhower asked that we proceed soberly as adults, not go to extremes, not undermine our resilient economy, and not overreact.

But most of President Eisenhower’s admonitions were ignored in the spectacular and costly action that is Iraq. In terms of the economic and fiscal balance Eisenhower said was crucial, America is spending about \$2 billion a week in Iraq, more than \$121 billion the first year, and may continue to do so for the foreseeable future—until, we are told, reconstruction is completed in 2008 or 2009, according to some estimates. But whether reconstruction ever will be completed, in Iraq or Afghanistan, remains an open question. Meanwhile, a projected ten-year American budget surplus of \$5.6 trillion projected at the beginning of the millennium has turned into a budget deficit of \$521 billion—far more than triple the \$158 billion

imbalance of fiscal 2002 and billions higher than the record shortfall of \$374 billion of 2003. At the same time, American support for the war in Iraq began to erode in 2004, according to major public opinion polls.

With considerable justification, one can argue that the \$2 billion spent per week in Iraq over recent periods of time could better be spent on a more sophisticated, multilateral policy against al Qaeda; reform of American intelligence agencies; reinvigoration of lagging counterterrorism policies to protect America from more attacks; a new preventive foreign, economic, and democracy development policy; and, perhaps most important of all, a pullback of Israel from the West Bank and the creation of a Palestinian state.

By comparison with present policy, a few years after President Eisenhower's military-industrial-complex warning, President John Kennedy faced the Cuban missile crisis. President Kennedy carried on in a steady way, speaking truth to power and overruling hardliners who wanted to go to war over Cuba. If a similar crisis occurred today, say in a confrontation with a nuclear-armed North Korea or a showdown with China, which may well become the world's next superpower, would American right-wing ideologues similarly be overruled? This is what William Hartung asks in chapter 10.

To help reverse our present course, Congress needs to expand its oversight role in national security policy. As recommended by the Hart-Rudman Commission, a program of ongoing education should provide legislative branch decision makers with more knowledge on national security. Appropriation subcommittees should be merged with their respective authorizing committees. This will reduce the congressional bureaucracy that slows the budget process and will allow more time for oversight of national security policy and of the other priority policies set forth in this volume. Congress also should establish a special body to oversee homeland security, as has been done with intelligence oversight.

To paraphrase President Reagan, are we, all things considered, better off today than on September 11? In 2004, a national poll by the nonpartisan Council for Excellence in Government found fewer than half of all Americans thought the United States was safer than on September 11. Another survey found that two-thirds of Americans believe terror will strike the United States in the near future.

Failures in American Middle East Policy

American failures in the Middle East are in the forefront of overall American foreign and national security policy failures, and so Patriotism, Democracy, and Common Sense takes a closer look at Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and Israel.

Afghanistan. After September 11, there was widespread support in the United States and around the world for American military intervention in Afghanistan. Yet today, America's legitimate war in Afghanistan to destroy Osama bin Laden has become little more than a holding action to protect one man in his

palace while allowing warlords to reign in the countryside, with little sustained effort to move the process toward either reconstruction or some political accommodation. Deals were cut to enable the United States to operate militarily against the remnants of al Qaeda without reference to what is necessary for future Afghan economic development, political stability, and representative governance.

Iraq. The preemptive unilateral force used in Iraq by America does not build on lessons learned from the history of imperialism. In Vietnam, a poor people's war triumphed over "shock-and-awe" hardware. In the Middle East, Oxford historian Elizabeth Monroe has elegantly recorded how British imperialism was "only a moment in the life of a region with a recorded history of four millennia." Yale historian Paul Kennedy has noted how the rationalizations of World War I-era British imperialists "bear an uncanny resemblance" to the rationalizations of American imperialist conservatives today. Kennedy suggests that America's "moment" in the Middle East may prove to be as brief in the long run as that of England. Jessica Tuchman Mathews, president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, presents a similar view in chapter 3.

Under the pretense of weapons of mass destruction and an unsubstantiated link between Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, America embarked on a war to redraw the political map of the Middle East. The war was designed by the American government to change the dynamics of the Middle East in such a way that a new political order, less hostile to our strategic partner and historic friend Israel, emerges.

As Eric Davis points out in *Patriotism, Democracy, and Common Sense*, the invasion of Iraq was designed to set in motion a ripple effect in which neighboring Iran and Syria, and possibly Saudi Arabia, would feel pressured to institute the types of political and economic reforms commensurate with an American vision of a new Middle East. With the removal of Israel's two most threatening enemies, namely the Ba'athi regimes in Iraq and Syria, this strategy would, it was thought, have a salutary impact on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. It would send a strong message to Palestinian rejectionists, both Islamists and secularists, that their policies had no future, marginalize Palestine National Authority President Yasir Arafat once and for all, and generate the political forces that would replace him with a pro-American government.

This policy assumed that the populations of Iraq, Iran, Syria, Palestine, and Saudi Arabia all desired democracy—or, at least, the corrupted American version of democracy, with government corporate welfare and tax breaks for the ruling elite, hands-off market economics that increase insecurity for the middle and working classes, and "zero-tolerance," racially biased prison building for the poor. However, these policy assumptions obviously failed to take into account whether the cultures and histories of the Middle Eastern countries make them receptive to democracy, the American version or any other. Eric M. Davis addresses this lack of historical and cultural perspective in chapter 16.

To state American policy in somewhat different words, American leaders have believed that the establishment of American-style democracy in Iraq will pressure other Arab regimes to reform. Reform will promote moderate groups in Arab countries. Those groups will help force Arab countries to withdraw their support for Islamic extremism. According to this view, Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation then will diminish and clear the way for a new Israeli-Palestinian equilibrium that is favorable to Israel. Of course, this doctrine is frightening to a host of observers in the Middle East and Europe. It could pave the way for more American intervention, say, in Syria. And it would remove from the American government the need to seriously re-engage in solving the central conflict in the Middle East between Palestinian and Israel.

But Iraq is a country that remembers its history, dating back millennia. The people of Iraq, who remember the Crusaders far better than Americans remember the winner of the last Super Bowl, have experienced humiliation after humiliation at the hands of the West. As the American occupation of Iraq has demonstrated, the people of the Middle East will make American lives difficult there, as, of course Spain and other nations have recognized by pulling their military contingents out of Iraq. The American military's torture and sexual abuse of Iraqi prisoners made the situation immeasurably worse. There is a growth of young people joining terrorist organizations, just as there was a growth of terrorist organizations in Northern Ireland when the United Kingdom unsuccessfully pursued a policy of repression, as Lord Wallace notes in chapter 7. Similarly, Ambassador Joseph Wilson concludes in his chapter, "At the end of it, I think the chances are really good that the consequences will be far graver to our national security that they were going in."

Palestine and Israel. At the same time, compared with the tireless, hands-on involvement and shuttle diplomacy in the Middle East that won President Carter the Nobel Peace Prize, the White House in recent years has demonstrated little leadership to address the heart of Muslim anger in the world: the lack of a two-state solution, which remains the preferred solution of majorities on both sides. Instead, in 2004, the right-wing American government unconditionally endorsed a violence-provoking scheme of the right-wing Israeli government. Initially, the American government gave unprecedented support for Israeli plans to annex large swaths of occupied Palestinian territories in the West Bank and, in effect, declared null and void the rights of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes. This was the first time in the history of the peace process that the U.S. president had preempted negotiations by announcing support for a unilateral initiative by one party. The United States essentially adopted the negotiating stance of the Israeli right: Palestinians can only be dealt with by force and *fait accompli*. The 2004 American preemption was the exact opposite of President Carter's strategy of honest brokering with and mutual respect for both sides.

Unless the United States unconditionally opposes the Israeli government's scheme, the war cries of Hamas and other militants will find a receptive audience. The conservative Israeli government always has been most comfortable fighting Palestinians and Arabs. It knows very well that "disengaging" from Gaza, while retaining the Israeli "right" to bomb or invade the evacuated territory while hunting alleged terrorists, will not bring the conflict closer to resolution. With the American government labeling Palestinians terrorists, the ultra-right Israeli government has more time to pursue an expansionist vision of a Greater Israel—by creating still more "facts on the ground" that the United States is likely to deceptively label "demographic reality."

Failures in Economic Policy

Just as American foreign policy seeks to preemptively impose the American establishment's will on other, poorer countries, so American economic policy is based on class warfare instigated by the rich and ruling class in the United States against the middle class, the working class, and the poor.

As a result, excluding the rich, most Americans are worse off economically today than in 2001. Middle-class baby boomers, who are just beginning to retire, can expect their economic position to further deteriorate. The radical right's long-term objective is to continue tax cuts for the rich and massively increase military spending. This will increase the national debt still more and result in greatly diminished education, employment, and health care investments for the middle class, working class, and poor.

But will the middle class make the sacrifices that conservatives expect of them and their children? The middle class rebelled in the case of Vietnam. The need to reverse course today is all the greater because the United States cannot continue in its role as international debtor, with competitors like the dictatorship in communist China holding large portions of our international debt.

We Are Worse Off. As with foreign policy and national security policy, when we ask whether America is better off today economically than in 2001, the answer to the average American is a decisive no.

Since 2001, the official unemployment rate is higher. But even this higher rate is misleadingly low. As Austan Goolsbee, professor of economics at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, has warned, the government in recent years has been "cooking the books" on unemployment. The unemployment rate has been underreported because persons on Social Security disability programs have not been counted as unemployed. If they had been counted, as they had been previously, the unemployment rate would be significantly higher.

In addition, underemployment and middle-class job insecurity are extensive, there are fewer payroll jobs, outsourcing of manufacturing and high-tech jobs to

workers in other countries has increased, the rich have gotten richer because of the massive tax cuts given to them, a huge budget surplus has been squandered into a deficit of over \$500 billion, and the poverty rate has increased. Child poverty rates are higher in America than in most industrialized countries. Income and wealth inequality remain enormous in America. In 2002, the average pay of chief executive officers in corporations was about 176 times the average pay of workers. Based on *New York Times* accounts, in terms of income and wealth, the United States is the most unequal industrialized country in the world and is growing more unequal faster than any other industrialized country.

The Tax Cuts Are Squeezing Seniors and the Middle Class. The easiest way to frame present American economic policy is by looking at the budget implications of the recent tax cuts of well over \$1 trillion, which went disproportionately to the rich.

In chapter 23, Jamie Galbraith makes clear that the beneficiaries of these tax cuts include oil firms, defense contractors, Iraq war profiteers, pharmaceutical companies, mining interests, and big media. These are economic interests whose basic position is maintained by government contracts, rights to natural resources, monopolies, patents, and government-granted protections. Their profits do not depend heavily on strong consumer demand or full employment. Full employment would itself bring other forms of political difficulty for conservatives, like stronger labor unions, pressure for higher wages, higher charitable contributions, and a stronger nonprofit sector.

Especially when considered alongside massive increases in military spending, the recent tax cuts, if continued and made permanent, will take a large toll on the federal budget and affect an array of investments and services important to the middle class, the working class, and the poor.

Where are we heading? Look at Social Security and Medicare. Baby boomers are people born between 1946 and 1964. When this huge baby-boom generation retires soon, costs will go up for Social Security and Medicare. From 2000 to 2030, Social Security and Medicare costs will increase by more than 5 percent of the size of the United States economy. This increase is larger than the United States defense budget.

So there will be more elderly people, and while there will inevitably be some changes in Social Security and Medicare, costs for these programs are going to rise substantially. At the same time, the nation has a variety of serious unmet needs: over 44 million people without health insurance; skyrocketing college tuitions; declines in college scholarships; more and more rich students edging out middle-class, working-class and poor students for slots in the best colleges; decrepit schools for working-class families and the poor; and decaying public infrastructure at a time when September 11 demands world-class public infrastructure.

How are we going to address these unmet needs and still meet the needs of a growing elderly population in future decades? A logical answer would be to raise more revenue,

because we will have more expenditures with the aging of the population. *Instead, the American government is reducing taxes on the rich.*

In chapter 22, Robert Greenstein concludes that if and when the 2001 tax cut is fully in effect, its annual cost will equal: more than three times everything the federal government spends on education at the elementary-, secondary-, and higher-education levels combined; or five times everything the federal government spends on housing and urban development; or twenty-four times the entire Environmental Protection Agency budget. If the tax cut is made permanent, the cost of just the portion of the tax cut going to the top 1 percent of the population will be as large as what the federal government spends on education at all levels.

The Tax Cuts and Increasing Debt Are Part of the Right's Long-Term Ideology. As articulated by Robert Greenstein, the massive tax cuts are part of a long-term agenda by the radical right in America to reduce public programs that benefit the middle class, working class, and poor. For example, a leading strategist of the radical right has argued for reducing by half the size of the domestic part of the federal government over future decades. *As this ideology indicates, the tax cuts and the goal of shrinking the federal government are being pursued as complementary long-term strategies.* Those pursuing these strategies are patient. They are willing to wait until 2010 to have the estate tax repealed. They are willing to take a long time to squeeze down the federal government, with the squeezing occurring gradually and incrementally but eventually reaching huge proportions.

In 1995, conservative Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich overreached and moved too fast. Today, the extreme right is not repeating that mistake. There is a clear understanding on the part of conservatives that, if one were to publish in the official federal budget today the kind of budget cuts that the recent federal tax cuts ultimately will entail, the tax cuts would have a considerably harder time being passed. *So the deep budget cuts are not being published in the federal budget today alongside the tax cuts.* This is part of the broader strategy to deceive and mislead the American people and an accommodating mainstream media—in economic policy as in foreign, national security, and Middle East policy.

The radical right also is lobbying for still larger tax cuts for the rich. Some want to eliminate all taxes on capital gains, dividends, and other forms of income and move toward a “flat tax.” The scheme is to allow deficits to continue to balloon until Wall Street demands larger and larger domestic spending cuts as a condition for holding down long-term interest rates.

The Middle Class and Their Children Don't Have the Financial or Moral Capital to Pursue All Goals. We therefore must confront a fundamental question about what kind of society we want and, in particular, what the role of the federal government should be in helping to bring that society about.

In 1965, when America was ratcheting up its intervention in Vietnam, President Johnson said we had enough resources for both “guns and butter.” In response,

the great American journalist Walter Lippman wrote a column in which he said that he didn't know whether we had enough *financial* capital for both, but he was sure we didn't have enough *political* and *moral* capital to fight a war in Vietnam and a war on poverty. He turned out to be absolutely right, as Jeff Faux discusses in chapter 21.

The early twenty-first century saw the war and post-war in Iraq diverting more and more money from domestic spending. So the additional economic problem is America's self-appointed burden of sustaining a continued role as the world's police, dedicated to repressing any movement, anywhere in the world, that appears to threaten the imperialism of American conservatives. This policy was set out in the American government's September 2002 National Security Strategy.

Many believe that the United States has neither the financial capital nor the moral capital to pursue such a strategy. Pursuing it would require a substantial sacrifice by the American middle class, which already, for example, is seeing its offspring edged out more and more by rich kids at the nation's top universities. Substantial sacrifice by the middle class is, of course, the political trigger, as it was in Vietnam. Sadly, we have long since learned that what you do to poor people has limited political consequences. However, in Jeff Faux's words, "when you start touching the security of the middle class in a sustained way, then there is trouble."

The Perilous International Position of the American Economy. At the same time, the American economy is in international trouble. We now have a \$500 billion annual trade deficit. Under current conditions, if we were to return to full employment in the United States, the trade deficit would be much greater. We have lived decades in a condition of progressive decline in our ability to pay our way in the world through the sale of goods and services, a decline that has been offset for most of that period, and sensationally in the last years of the 1990s, by the willingness of the rest of the world to lend the differences to us, and to do so in dollars—that is to say, in a currency whose issues we control. And therefore the debts were incurred by us on very favorable terms—terms not available, basically, to any other large debtor in the world.

In his chapter, Jamie Galbraith explains how this international monetary order has been in existence for about thirty years—quite a long time for any single international monetary order to persist. The architecture of the present system is not stable, for it depends entirely on the portfolio investment decisions of a small number of major players—notably Japan and communist China—as well as the herd mentality of powerful private speculators. The American media fail to sufficiently remind the public of our vulnerability.

The risk is that, without attending to the decay of our industrial system and the increasing disrepute of America as a world leader because of our policies in Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine and Israel, a great part of the international community may stop lending us back our dollars. And oil-rich Middle East countries may increasingly seek to expand their relationships with rising powers like China, which have a pressing need for oil from foreign sources.

Domestic Policy Failures That Mirror Foreign Policy Failures

For conservatives whose long-term goal is to dramatically shrink federal domestic programs, September 11 was a godsend. In spite of its vast resources, America always has neglected the poor. With citizens and a passive media focused on terrorism, the war in Iraq, and the economy, it has been convenient for the American government to practice benign neglect, and more, for the truly disadvantaged and to allow racist practices to flourish.

Presently, there is no coherent American policy for the poor, minorities, the inner city, and depressed rural areas. Instead, we have top-down conservative ideology, unsupported, for the most part, by the scientific evaluation that is necessary to prove that taxpayer dollars are not being wasted, as they have been in Iraq. The ideology is based on free-market rhetoric; public-sector neglect; a racially biased, “zero-tolerance,” “tough-state” prison-building war on crime (really a war against the poor); a blind eye to crime by the rich; and an appeal for “faith-based” solutions while we allow communist China, whose official religion is atheism, to hold much of our foreign debt.

The Free Market. As Kevin Phillips remarks in his foreword, the American government is practicing socialism for the rich and laissez-faire for the poor. We are increasingly leaving the fate of most people in America up to the un-tender mercies of what the federal government misleadingly describes as “the market.” In fact, that “market” really is a highly concentrated set of powerful corporate players who are quite willing to subvert or corrupt free markets whenever they get in their way, as our experience with Enron, Global Crossing and other rogue corporations affirms.

The failure of the free-market model to bring anything approaching economic well-being and social stability is apparent not just in the United States itself, of course, but around the world. The virtual disintegration of large parts of what we euphemistically call the “developing” world is one of the great underreported news stories of our time and one of the many failures of corporate-controlled American commercial media.

With the economy booming in the 1990s, many people stuck at the bottom of the economy nonetheless still had jobs. In the new millennium, unemployment for African-American youth was, in 2003, for example, over 30 percent and for Hispanic youth around 20 percent, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The mainstream media have said little about these numbers.

In the new millennium, the American government has made no attempt to deal with such long term, structural unemployment for minorities, youth, and the poor. Careful evaluations, as well as assessments by *Business Week* and the conservative *Economist*, also have shown that “enterprise zones,” with their supply-side ideology, have failed in their attempt to use tax breaks to lure corporations into inner cities to generate jobs for the truly disadvantaged. Earlier, the conservative, supply-side job training program for out-of-school youth, misleadingly called the Job Training Partner-

ship Act, failed, according to the Department of Labor and careful evaluations—in large part because it in fact had little training and mainly followed a scientifically unsubstantiated “work-first” ideology.

Poverty rates, as unemployment rates, declined in the United States during the booming 1990s. But poverty rose in the new millennium. Today, the richest nation in history has 35 million people living in poverty. That is malignant neglect by the federal government. In 2002, the poverty rate for people under eighteen years old in America was over 30 percent among African-Americans and approaching 30 percent for Hispanics, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Again, mainstream American corporate, commercial media have said little about these numbers.

As originally conceived, “welfare” for the poor, (as opposed to today’s welfare for the rich) was designed to reduce poverty. Over recent years, “welfare reform” was supposed to be the ticket out of crippling dependency for millions of poor Americans. But the verdict is in. Most of those poor Americans are still poor. A lot of them got off the welfare rolls, but that didn’t necessarily get them into economic self-sufficiency—as an increasing body of careful evaluations show—, in spite of the lucky boost that the economic boom of the 1990s provided.

To echo Elliott Currie in chapter 26, if ever the welfare model of the extreme right should have worked, in short, it was in the economic boom of the 1990s. For a while, before poverty began to rise in the new millennium, the boom did help produce some statistics that were superficially comforting to the boosters of “welfare reform.” But even in the face of the expanded opportunities provided by the boom, most of the people who left welfare did not leave the prison of deprivation.

One way of measuring the failure of “welfare reform” is to look at the “self-sufficiency standard” developed originally by professor Diana Pearce at the University of Washington. This is an attempt to come up with a more adequate measure of poverty than the official one, which everyone except radical conservatives recognizes as much too low.

The self-sufficiency standard tries to calculate how much it would actually cost families, in various places, to pay for all the things they absolutely must have in order to be self sufficient—like housing, food, child care and medical care—without having to rob Peter to pay Paul (there are no frills, and no savings, in this budget). In Chicago, for example, the self-sufficiency standard works out to \$38,000 for a single parent with one child in school and another of preschool age. How many single parents leaving welfare under the current “reform” rules moved into \$38,000 jobs?

Yet it is precisely the failed approach toward attacking “dependency” by forcing single parents into the low-wage labor market—and often depriving them of the job training opportunities that might lead them into those \$38,000 (or \$48,000) jobs—that is being accelerated by stealth today by the federal government, as the attention of the nation is on national security, the Middle East, and the economy. Elliott Currie reaches this conclusion in *Patriotism, Democracy, and Common Sense*. The

kind of serious policy discussion that the self-sufficiency standard should be forcing upon us is not happening. There is no leadership from the White House. Mainstream media appear to be asleep, or not to care.

Public-Sector Disinvestment. To exacerbate the failure of the private “market” for the poor, the federal government has disinvested from or failed to invest in the public sector. An important example is America’s failure in education, which is supposed to be a way out of poverty and a ladder to achieve the American dream.

Here are some of the realities of failed education, especially for the truly disadvantaged in America:

- States now spend more per year on prisons than on higher education, while fifteen years ago spending priorities were just the opposite.
- In urban public schools in poor neighborhoods, more than two-thirds of children fail to reach even the “basic” level on national tests.
- There are six million students on the verge of dropping out of high school, and a quarter of high-school students read below the basic level.
- Good teachers are a key to improving student achievement. But 20 percent of teachers retire within three years. In urban communities, 50 percent leave the profession in five years, in part due to low pay and a lack of support from the school system.
- Corporate CEOs make 264 times as much as public school teachers. In the 1960s, corporate CEOs made only a trifling 40 times as much.
- On average, America’s schools are forty years old and a third of our school buildings need widespread repair or replacement. One in three schools use trailers or portable classrooms to house students. The National Education Association estimates that more than \$53 billion is required to ensure that all schools have adequate infrastructure for Internet access, computers, and technical assistance. \$268 billion is needed in repairs simply to bring schools up to basic standards.
- College tuitions are rising rapidly. Currently, about 400,000 qualified high school graduates will not pursue a full-time, four-year degree because of an inability to pay. More than 100,000 students are in danger of dropping out of school due to increased tuition costs. College costs stop nearly half of low-income students from attending a public four-year school. In 1975–76 a Pell grant covered 84 percent tuition at a four-year public school. Now it only covers 39 percent.

What is the federal government doing about these realities in the new millennium? Based on numerous scientific evaluations over decades, one of America’s most successful educational programs is preschool—as every middle class and wealthy parent knows. But our preschool program for the *poor*, Head Start, is serving only about

half of all eligible children. Early Head Start serves only 5 percent of eligible children. Working-class families find good preschool ever more difficult to secure and to afford. By contrast, many countries in “Old Europe” treat preschool as a human right and provide it for all children. The Committee for Economic Development, formed by major American corporations, reports that \$25-\$35 billion annually is needed to ensure that all children lacking a pre-kindergarten education receive one. This is less than half of the annual tax cuts pocketed by millionaires in recent federal tax cuts for the rich.

“No Child Left Behind” long has been a term associated with the effective policy advocated by the nonprofit Children’s Defense Fund. In recent years, the federal government has misled the public by appropriating the name. But the resulting federal scheme bears no resemblance to the priorities of the Children’s Defense Fund. An assessment by the Harvard University School of Education Civil Rights Project of the first year (2002-2003) of implementation has concluded “that federal accountability rules have derailed state reforms and assessment strategies, that the requirements have no common meaning across state lines, and that the sanctions fall especially hard on minority and integrated schools, asking for much less progress from affluent suburban schools. The market-and-choice-oriented policies, which were imposed on schools ‘in need of improvement’ have consumed resources and local administrative time but have small impacts and are not being seriously evaluated.”

The Leave No Child Behind Act focuses on outcomes, without funding the interventions that the best research and evaluations have shown to be necessary to achieve those outcomes. Without quality interventions that sufficiently invest in each child (like better teacher training and smaller classroom sizes) there can, of course, never be quality outcomes. An additional \$84-\$148 billion annually is required to fulfill the goals of No Child Left Behind and assist disadvantaged students. \$84 billion is about what the federal government asked for as one supplemental appropriation for occupation and “nation building” in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Recent conservative federal educational ideology also has asserted that private school vouchers are a viable alternative to public school reform. But there is no scientific evidence that private vouchers are more cost-effective than replications of existing public school reform successes. Opinion polls consistently show that Americans are against vouchers.

Advocates of private vouchers like to say that the issue is choice. That is not so. There are plenty of scientifically proven inner-city public school successes for a school system to choose from, as discussed later. The real issue is accountability. Private schools funded through vouchers are not accountable to the taxpayers whose public sector money finances them.

Inequality in education is, of course, strongly linked to expenditure per pupil. The rich, who tend to support vouchers, often say the issue is not money. But what do the rich do? They send their kids to Andover or Exeter, spending well over

\$20,000 a year. If it is good enough for the rich, why isn't it good enough for the poor, the working class, and the middle class? What we need is public financing of education that allows the annual level of investment per child in American inner cities to be the same as the annual level of investment per child in the suburbs.

At the same time, America's neighborhoods and schools are resegregating. As the Harvard Civil Rights Project has documented, the school desegregation advocated by the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. progressed till the late 1980s, when the courts decided that the goals of the landmark Supreme Court *Brown v. Board of Education* decision had largely been achieved. Since these short-sighted court decisions of the 1980s, segregation has sharply increased. Today, about two-thirds of African American students and three-fourths of Hispanic students nationally attend predominantly minority schools, one-third of each group in intensely segregated schools.

This, too, is malignant neglect practiced by the American government and leadership. Another example of the lack of public sector leadership on race in America was the forced resignation of the Senate Majority Leader not so long ago for, in effect, praising the segregationist positions of a Senate colleague who had passed away.

Tough-State, Zero-Tolerance Prison Building for the Poor. Tax breaks for the rich, disproportionately white, have been complemented by zero-tolerance policing of and prison building for the poor, disproportionately African American, Latino and Native American.

The military strategy in Iraq and some of the most popular policing strategies against the poor in the United States are part of the same conservative ideology. The domestic equivalent of "shock and awe" is "zero tolerance" in policing. Police undertake "get tough" tactical street crackdowns to increase arrest rates. But there is little evidence that zero-tolerance policing was responsible for much of the decline in crime in the 1990s, as professor Richard Moran has pointed out in the *New York Times*. At the same time, zero tolerance has outraged much of the minority community.

The shortcomings of zero tolerance illustrate deeper, more systematic problems. In particular, a major study funded by the U.S. Department of Justice and six major foundations has documented racial bias across the juvenile justice system. Riots in Cincinnati not long ago were a reminder of African-American perceptions that police racially profile minority youth. Beyond racial profiling, the most basic problem in the criminal justice system is the racial bias in the mandatory minimum sentencing of persons arrested on drug charges. For example, sentences for crack cocaine, used disproportionately by minorities, are much harsher than sentences for powder cocaine, used disproportionately by whites. As one consequence, African Americans constitute 14 percent of drug users nationally but represent 35 percent of drug arrests, 55 percent of drug convictions, and 75 percent of prison admissions.

In the early 1990s, one out of every four young African-American men in America was in prison, on probation, or on parole at any one time, according to the Sentencing Project in Washington, D.C. That is a stunning statistic. Yet today *one out of every three* young African-American men is in prison, on probation, or on parole at any one time in America. In big cities, the number is *one out of every two*. Similarly, we know from Professor Milton Friedman, the conservative economist, that the rate of incarceration of African-American men in America today is four times greater than the rate of incarceration of black men in pre-Mandela, apartheid South Africa. Nonetheless, the fastest-growing group of male prison inmates consists of Latinos.

When it comes to the treatment and degradation of these inmates, there are, not surprisingly, parallels between what was done in Iraq and what takes place every day in American prisons. American policy toward degradation and humiliation in prison is dramatically different than policy in European and other countries. Foreign observers have been shocked by the humiliations in American prisons, as documented by professor James Q. Whitman at Yale Law School. For example, just as an American female soldier was accused of forcing Iraqi prisoners to masturbate in front of others, so American prison guards of the opposite sex can be allowed to view inmates using toilets. These and other American practices are not allowed in Europe.

America now leads the world in incarceration, with over two million people in prison. The United States has 25 percent of the world's prisoners but only 5 percent of the world's population. Especially as a result of the mandatory minimum sentencing policy for drugs, we have more than quadrupled the number of prison cells in America since the 1980s. Over that time, we reduced by over 80 percent appropriations for housing for the disadvantaged. So prison building has become one of America's leading housing policies for the poor, just as it has become one of our leading education policies for the poor. These linkages among housing policy, education policy, prison building, zero tolerance, and racism are big stories, yet corporate controlled American mainstream media virtually ignore them.

The United States had developed a dual-track system for addressing substance abusers, with the tracks largely defined in racial terms. For minorities, a primary track leads to arrest, conviction, and incarceration. For white Americans, especially those who are more affluent, often there is no intervention, intervention through the health and treatment system. For people in the South Bronx, drug abuse is treated as a crime. For people in Chevy Chase, it is treated as an illness.

Prison building has become a job-generating, economic development policy for rural white Americans, who send lobbyists with six-figure incomes to Washington to fight for still more prisons. The prison-industrial complex is a perfect domestic parallel to President Eisenhower's military-industrial complex. But mainstream American corporate media have said almost nothing about the parallel.

Having served long sentences, many people now are leaving prison, sometimes at a rate of over 500,000 per year. Some four million do not have the right

to vote, by state law. The American government has no effective policy for reintegrating ex-offenders into society and training them to become productive, employed, tax-paying citizens. Even though there are excellent models, like Delancey Street, that achieve such outcomes, there is little incentive for the federal government to replicate them to scale because most ex-offenders, in Florida and elsewhere, would vote against most present federal policies. Why lose an election by giving a fair shake to someone who has paid his debt to society? As a result, recidivism rates are over 70 percent in many places, so offenders are back in their cells and not in voting booths. There is no better example of malignant neglect by the ruling classes in America.

As these recidivism rates imply, we know, based on some of the most prestigious American studies of prison building to date (for example, by a panel of the National Academy of Science), that the criminal justice response to crime is, at most, running in place. However, in spite of a sevenfold increase in the prison population since the late 1960s, the FBI rate of violent crime (based on the aggregation of murders, rapes, robberies and aggregated assaults reported to police) is significantly higher today (in big, medium, and small cities) than in 1969, when the bipartisan Eisenhower Violence Commission released its final report—and when one of the commission’s task forces concluded that “few things are more pervasive, more frightening, more real today than violent crime and the fear of being assaulted, mugged, robbed or raped.”

Equally important, rates of violent crime today are much higher in the United States than in almost all industrialized countries. For example, the rate of homicide death for a young man today is about twenty-three times higher in the United States than in the United Kingdom.

When it comes to homicide with firearms, America far outdistances other wealthy nations, most of which have far more restrictions on firearms. The firearms death rate in the United States today is eight times greater than the rates of the twenty-five other wealthy nations combined. In a recent year, handguns were used to murder 2 people in New Zealand, 15 in Japan, 30 in Great Britain, 106 in Canada, 213 in Germany, and over 9,000 in the United States.

But what about the declines in crime in the 1990s? Didn’t they occur as prison building surged? What were the reasons, based on the best studies and evaluations available, like the work of professor Alfred Blumstein at Carnegie-Mellon University? Two leading (and interrelated) reasons were the booming economy and the waning of the crack epidemic. Community-based nonprofit organizations appeared to have been successful in some places, like Boston. The Brady Bill, which controlled access to handguns by ex-offenders, appeared to have a national impact. So did community-based, problem-oriented policing. Some of the decline in violent crime was in fact explained by increased imprisonment (estimates are in the range of about 5 percent to about 30 percent). But the impact of prison building was overstated by politicians, the government, the prison-industrial complex, its lobbyists, and

naïve media. In addition, prison building has been highly cost-ineffective compared with other options, like diversion of nonviolent offenders into community programs. Nor was the fad of boot camps successful. Its failure was documented well in studies by the University of Maryland that have been published by the United States National Institute of Justice.

In perspective, there is an eerie resemblance between America's preemptive, dominating, nonpreventive, shock-and-awe, high-tech, weapon-intense, community-insensitive, personally humiliating, corporate-profiteering, military-industrial-complex foreign policy aimed at people of different races and cultures and America's zero-tolerance, racially biased, personally humiliating, nonpreventive, prison-building, high-tech, firearm-permissive, corporate-profiteering, prison-industrial-complex policy toward the truly disadvantaged in the United States. Both policy wars have been initiated by the well-off, mostly white, conservative ruling elite. Both are expensive. Both are ineffective. Today, the average American is safe from neither terrorism nor crime. American corporate mainstream media fail to pursue investigative reporting on the resemblance.

Faith-Based Schemes. In recent years, there also has been rhetoric on “volunteerism,” “civility,” “empowerment” and “faith-based solutions” for the truly disadvantaged. Research has shown that these sometimes can be effective notions at the street level of program implementation. But too often such terms try to mislead the people into conservative double standards. For example, while both Gulf Wars were carried out by large numbers of paid military staff, large numbers of paid support staff, and enormous amounts of high-tech equipment, American inner city programs are encouraged to use unpaid volunteers with totally inadequate equipment, like nonfunctioning computers, in inadequate facilities. This somehow is supposed to “empower” the neighborhood and, presumably, reduce unemployment, poverty, racism, and crime while it improves rotting inner cities schools and does something about nonexistent job training.

Similarly, it presently is fashionable in the private and public sectors to make grants to “faith-based” nonprofit groups. Yet no scientific evidence exists to prove that “faith-based” nonprofit organizations perform better than secular nonprofit organizations. Some nonprofit faith-based groups are successful and some are not; some nonprofit secular organizations are successful and some are not. The key is not faith-based versus secular programming. Research shows the key is whether a nonprofit organization is carrying out interventions that have proven to work and whether the organization has the institutional capacity to cost-effectively implement.



Failures of the Media to Serve the People

In pursuing its policies, the American government has been extremely effective in controlling the flow of information to the media about its workings. The government has been helped by a powerful conservative ideological machine linked to media controlled by large corporations.

The Conservative Ideological Machine. Much of the present media environment was shaped by the conservative billionaire Richard Mellon Scaife and his colleagues, as Eric Alterman describes in chapter 35.

In 1964, after the defeat of Barry Goldwater, Scaife and his associates concluded that the conservative message was being framed by what they considered an elite media, unsympathetic to their cause. They understood that, if you don't win the media, you can't win anything else. So Scaife and other conservatives invested hundreds of billions of dollars from 1964 to the present in new institutions to frame conservative ideology.

Strategically, conservatives focused on both media control and media policy. They funded foundations, nonprofit ideology centers, radio and television talk shows, training camps for student journalists, and internship programs. They supported nonprofit institutes that targeted the Federal Communications Commission, Congress, and the courts—to guarantee that they had policies sympathetic to the conservative view of how media should be operated.

As one result, while there were only a few conservative nonprofit organizations and centers for conservative ideology in Washington in 1964, today there are more than 300. Some are small. Other nonprofit conservative centers are huge, with annual budgets in the tens of millions, financed by corporations and conservative foundations.

Eric Alterman shows how the the new conservative institutions created thousands of well-paying jobs as part of a perpetual motion machine for conservative ideology. Prospective employees have been placed in jobs in conservative ideological centers, the *Washington Times*, *Inside* magazine, the *Wall Street Journal*, and many other institutions of the far right. They have high-salaried careers in this world, and sometimes move over to Fox News or talk radio. Some can speak to millions of people. The ideological machine is enormously useful because it provides conservative activists with a kind of tribal drum to constantly make their voices heard in American politics.

In the 2000 presidential election, the machine was targeted to places that were of paramount importance to the radical right—above all, Florida. Through encouragement by Rush Limbaugh, FreeRepublic.com, and Fox News, thousands of conservatives hopped on planes, flew to Florida, and helped to shut down the vote count in Miami-Dade. Those votes were the votes that would have made the difference, and they were disallowed because the counties did not make the deadline because the vote was shut down.

Well-disciplined, the conservative activist machine can blast e-mail and faxes in the morning and then repeat any given message all day on web sites, Rush Limbaugh, Bill O'Reilly, Sean Hannity, talk radio, cable television, the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page, and the *Weekly Standard*.

Corporate Media. The success of the conservative machine has been facilitated by the corporatization of the media. Competition in the media has declined. Ten corporations now own most of American media.

In chapter 31, Robert McChesney and John Nichols compare corporate media today to the scene in the 1974 film *The Godfather, Part II*, where American gangsters are sitting on a rooftop on Havana in 1958, slicing a birthday cake with the outline of Cuba on it. Each slice represents a casino, given to one of the gangsters to run. That is exactly how media and communication policies have been created in the United States for the last fifty years. Today the media corporations and trade associations have enormous lobbying powers, not because they're concerned about the average citizen but because they're fighting each other for the biggest slice of the American and global cake—they're at war with each other. The one thing they all agree on is that it's their cake, and nobody else should get a slice. It's their private system.

Many of these corporate media, like Clear Channel, General Electric, Fox, and Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, are big campaign contributors to conservatives. As a result, corporate media often bias their coverage in support of conservative ideology. Together, the conservative propaganda machine and much of the corporate media have helped the American government mislead the American people, convincing large audiences that the government could not have prevented September 11, there was a link between Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, the invasion of Iraq would reduce terrorism, tax cuts for the rich would help the rest of us, the budget deficit and high unemployment rates were not a real problem, communist China would not potentially cause problems by holding so much of our debt, there was no long-run conservative plan to shrink programs that benefit the middle class, prison building was effective, "welfare reform" worked, poverty wasn't increasing, segregation wasn't increasing, crime wasn't many times higher here than in most other industrialized countries, and public sector-led reform of the deteriorated public education systems of our inner cities was not possible.

Up to the point where the United States invaded Iraq, a majority of Americans polled were against the war. Yet a study by the nonprofit Fairness and Accuracy in Media found that, in the weeks leading up to the war, there were 393 interviews on the war done on the four major nightly newscasts (NBC, CBS, ABC, and the PBS *NewsHour* with Jim Lehrer). Only three of those interviews were with people opposed to the war. By contrast, media outside the United States had much more negative coverage on and opposition to the war, as Julian Borger of the *Guardian* recalls in chapter 20.

But, as Robert McChesney and John Nichols remind us, it is not natural for the conservative propaganda machine, corporate media, and the American government to walk in lock-step. This was not the vision of the nation's founders, like Franklin and Jefferson, who understood that, without a diverse, free media, you cannot have democracy.

WHAT ALTERNATIVE POLICIES BETTER FULFILL AMERICA'S PROMISE?

By contrast to the domination and misinformation of present policies, more effective alternative policies can be framed as a priority on common sense and democracy.

“Common sense” is the stuff of Ben Franklin, Thomas Paine, and Thomas Jefferson. The founders of our nation, born in the Age of Enlightenment, believed in reason, not ideology. Reason builds on the lessons of history and the evidence of science. “Democracy” here means policy not based on the “regimentation by a handful of rulers” that President Roosevelt warned against or the control by the “military-industrial complex” that President Eisenhower cautioned against but on “we the people,” the opening words of the Constitution. “We the people” means real, one person—one vote power by average citizens and genuine democratic transparency, not stealth decision-making by a small plutocracy in Washington and Wall Street.

What are some examples of common sense and democracy in the alternative policies found in this book? Foreign and national security policy illustrations include a stronger military based on the realities of the twenty-first century, not the policies of the Cold War, and multilateral, preventive foreign aid that empowers nongovernmental organizations in impoverished nations. In the Middle East, common sense and democracy mean remembering the failures of British and French colonial imperialism, recognizing that American torture and sexual humiliation in Iraqi prisons will have a profoundly damaging long term effect, remembering the success of the poor people's war in Vietnam, and creating an equitable peace in Palestine and Israel. In American economic policy, examples of common sense and democracy include the rejection of scientifically unsupported supply-side ideology, including tax breaks for the rich, and creation of a Fair Economic Deal for the middle class, working class, and poor. For the truly disadvantaged, illustrations include replication to scale of successful model programs already proven by scientific evaluations and the facilitation of a “bubble-up” process of grassroots development led by the nonprofit inner city organizations, which are much closer to the people than the federal government. The importance of scientific evaluations as the basis for alternative policy has been underscored by a coalition of Nobel laureates and other distinguished scientists, who recently issued a statement that American federal policy often is based

not on scientific evidence but on the distortion of facts. Last, common sense and democracy in the media is illustrated by how our Founders were against corporate controlled media and by the success of institutions like MoveOn.org in promoting grassroots citizen organizing, advocacy, and fund raising.

Consider a range of alternatives in each of these policy areas:

Alternative American Foreign and National Security Policy

Building on the recommendations of the bipartisan Hart-Rudman Commission, a follow-up independent task force of the Council on Foreign Relations, and the bipartisan 9/11 Commission, new foreign and national security policy needs to evolve from the following principles:

- National security policy must understand the changing nature of conflict.
- America's military response must look dramatically different.
- A reformed military must legitimize preventive diplomacy backed by force and resist preemption.
- Preventive diplomacy requires multilateral action.
- Multilateral action must reassert the legitimacy of the United Nations.
- Preventive diplomacy and multilateralism require increased and more effective foreign aid.
- Counterterrorism policy in America must be implemented with more urgency.
- Counterterrorism policy must balance security and liberty.

National Security Policy Must Understand the Changing Nature of Conflict. With few exceptions, post-Cold War conflict has been characterized by nonarrayed enemies—those representing asymmetrical threats. Asymmetrical threats use ingenuity, not strength, to bypass American military superiority. September 11 was undertaken by nineteen suicidal men at a total cost of about \$500,000. They used the Internet and elementary flight instructions. They converted commercial airlines into weapons of mass destruction. Our technology was used against us.

To successfully change the nature of national security policy, America first needs fundamental reform at the CIA. We need to block efforts to politicize the intelligence product and return the CIA to fierce honesty, professionalism, and independence in its analytic product. We need the CIA to be led by professionals like former directors Stansfield Turner or George H. W. Bush, with the character to stand up to White House and Pentagon pressure to usurp the agency's functions and preempt its analysis.

Beyond upgrading the standards by which the United States chooses a director of central intelligence, we need to generate more timely, comprehensive, professional,

transparent, and apolitical national intelligence estimates; return imagery analysis, agenda-free, from the Pentagon to the CIA; and reconstitute an independent media analysis capability in the CIA, as Ray McGovern recommends in chapter 4. With such reforms in place in recent years, America might have been better prepared for the September 11 attacks.

America's Military Response Must Look Dramatically Different. First and foremost, Americans need to be convinced that an alternative to present policy will protect them militarily. America must possess a strong and effective military. The source of that strength lies in the recognition that twenty-first-century military policy must look and perform differently from twentieth century military policy. In the new millennium, American military policy needs to build on technology but also be more human. This is one of Gary Hart's lessons in chapter 2.

Technologically, for example, we need lighter, swifter expeditionary forces to fight terrorism. But military technology swiftly becomes outmoded. Accordingly, instead of building entirely new ships, planes and tanks, we need to build ships, planes, and tank platforms with long lives. Up-to-date weapons and sensors can be "plugged in" to the platforms and then replaced as technology moves on. The two best current examples of platform technology are the B-52 bomber and the aircraft carrier. The B-52 is over six decades old. Aircraft carriers can be kept in service for fifty years. They are the platforms. We constantly change the weapons and sensors they carry. In the future, more weapons systems need to be so configured.

In terms of the human factor, human resourcefulness is more crucial than ever. The military and our intelligence agencies must recruit and promote with a higher priority on ingenuity. Human intelligence failed us on September 11. All our technology was unable to stop the attacks. Exotic Pentagon communications networks are vulnerable to twenty-one year-old hackers. On the other hand, American military incursions via precision-guided munitions onboard planes flying from Diego Garcia and aircraft carriers in the Indian Ocean were made possible by very human skills. The incursions were guided by Delta Force personnel wearing civilian clothes and riding mules across the hills of Afghanistan.

A Reformed Military Must Legitimize Preventive Diplomacy Backed by Force and Resist Preemption. In chapter 10, William Hartung concludes that diplomacy backed by force means America in the role of Atticus Finch, as played by Gregory Peck in the film adaptation of Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Peck played a Southern trial lawyer defending the rights of an African-American unjustly accused by whites. Ironically, an America that stood up for justice, defended the underdogs, and felt secure enough to put down the gun instead of automatically picking up the gun at the slightest provocation—an America that was more Gregory Peck and less John Wayne—would be far better suited to fighting a threat like al Qaeda.

Why? Because we are in a propaganda war. The American military policy of talking loudly and arrogantly, carrying many big sticks, torturing prisoners and

sexually humiliating them has alienated the majority of the people on the planet. These are the people and governments we need to work with to curb a threat like al Qaeda, a network that functions in perhaps as many as sixty countries. “Regime change” is an irrelevant, costly extravagance in the face of a network like al Qaeda, which can operate with relatively small amounts of money, without government sponsorship, preying in the weaknesses and the complexities of our globalized economic system to sustain itself.

The costs of “regime change” through preemptive war misdirect our resources away from the battle against al Qaeda. In so doing, preemptive war may have increased the ability of terrorists to strike America, not decreased it.

The elimination of nuclear weapons globally also illustrates a policy of preventive diplomacy, rather than preemptive war. An important first step is to better fund and globalize legislation originally passed by Republican Senator Richard Lugar and Democratic Senator Sam Nunn. The Nunn-Lugar legislation created a set of programs designed to neutralize the nuclear capability of the former Soviet Union by helping to pay for destruction of nuclear missiles and warheads and by finding alternative employment for weapons scientists, so they don’t sell their skills to the highest bidder on the global market. The United States is worried about Osama bin Laden, a global businessman, obtaining nuclear missiles. So we must ask, where are the nuclear missiles that Osama is most likely to buy? They are in the former Soviet Union.

Of course, the goal should be to get rid of nuclear weapons altogether, just as our domestic goal must be to get rid of handguns. The mere existence of nuclear weapons is dangerous, destabilizing, and demoralizing. Like a loaded gun under your pillow, nuclear weapons are just as dangerous to the folks who have them as they are to folks who don’t. Brandishing them and threatening people with them, as the American government has done, is a sure-fire recipe for convincing countries that they need their own nuclear missiles, if for no other reason than to get themselves off the Department of Defense’s “regime change” list.

Tyrants around the world surely have noticed the deferential treatment that North Korea, which appears to have some nuclear weapons, got compared with Saddam Hussein, who did not have such weapons. So what the American government seems to be saying by its actions is, in the words of William Hartung in chapter 10, “Get nuclear weapons, and we’ll treat you nice, and negotiate. Fail to get nuclear weapons and we’ll bomb you into the Stone Age and kill your family.” What kind of incentive is that to dissuade dictators from trying to get nuclear weapons?

Preventive Diplomacy Requires Multilateral Action. We need to build and nurture our alliances with other countries. When the State Department recently released a *Patterns of Global Terrorism* report, the spokesperson made a point of saying that the two countries that have given America the most help in dealing with al Qaeda were

in “Old Europe”: France and Germany. The State Department made this point to emphasize that, if the American military doesn’t stop insulting France and Germany, important ties will be further damaged.

A broad spectrum of people realizes that having allies is common sense and that insulting them is a bad thing. If we are to have an effective policy against terrorism, America must follow the money, and that means, for example, leaning on the Saudis and the Pakistanis. We need to have a more responsible approach to the global economy that says, if certain aspects of the financial system must be regulated in order to make sure we don’t have another World Trade Center disaster, and if money therefore has to flow a little more slowly, then so be it.

An alternative foreign policy, then, must take multilateralism seriously. This cannot be just serious rhetorically, as was true under the Clinton administration, which claimed the mantle of multilateralism while it carried out policy after policy that was thoroughly unilateralist in its trajectory. The first steps should include embracing the Kyoto accords, the International Criminal Court, and the Treaty of Rome.

Multilateral Action Must Reassert the Legitimacy of the United Nations. The United Nations must take the lead in Iraq. The first obligation of a military occupying power is to end the occupation. That is true of Israel in Palestine, and it is true of the United States in Iraq. The United Nations has to be the alternative to military occupation.

No one can deny that the United Nations has failed to live up to its 1945 charter in many respects. But attacks on the United Nations by the radical right in the United States fail to realize that, far from being an independent actor, the United Nations was designed as a kind of “holding company”—an enterprise where many members hold a stake but where some shareholders have a proportionately more influential role. The disproportionate stakeholders are the Permanent Five members of the Security Council—the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, and China. Of these, the United States is by far the most powerful stakeholder. As professor Paul Kennedy at Yale has reminded us, failures to act against conflict and improve prospects for world peace are not the fault of the holding company but of the major shareholders, when they cannot agree. The United Nations still has great potential, but only when its major players, beginning with the United States, learn how better to work together.

At the same time, it is crucial to advocate for reforms to make United Nations operations more effective. Perhaps the most important reform is to democratize the Security Council—no permanent members and no vetoes. Of course, such reform is not now politically feasible, but the issue must constantly be put on the table.

More feasible in the short run is advocacy to empower the General Assembly. This is the plan of Phyllis Bennis in chapter 9. Historically, in the first forty years or so of the United Nations, partly because of the Cold War paralysis, partly because of the legacy of colonialism, partly for a host of other reasons, the General Assembly

was the engine of motion. It wasn't the Security Council. It was to the General Assembly that newly independent former colonies would send their representatives to claim independence in front of the world. It was the General Assembly that created the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and all of the agencies that were designed to help countries of the global South compete on something resembling a more level playing field with the wealthy countries of the North. None of this happened because of Security Council resolutions. It happened because of the General Assembly and its more-or-less democratic approach to things.

Today, in the thinking of Bennis, the best way to empower the General Assembly is for the United States to simply back off—to become a more cooperative major shareholder. Right now, in the General Assembly, fear of antagonizing the United States forms a huge block on the ability of countries to take advantage of the global reach of the United Nations.

We need, then, to transform the United Nations from an institution where only the Security Council matters to a venue for real multinational interaction.

Preventive Diplomacy and Multilateralism Require Increased and More Effective Foreign Aid. In recent years, the American government and the mainstream media have resisted answering the most obvious question: Why was the September 11 attack committed?

In a world where one-quarter of the population lives in abject poverty, there is deep, lasting resentment over how America combines its wealth and power with willful arrogance, self-interest, corporate greed, arbitrary consumption of resources, and hypocrisy. We use a “shock-and-awe” invasion of Iraq to impose “democracy.” But what is America’s definition of democracy? A corrupt one dollar—one vote system in which the winner lost the popular vote for president in 2000 by over 500,000 votes. People know this around the world. They know how American “democracy” has failed to solve the nation’s internal decay—symbolized, for example, by racism, segregation, poverty, inequality, violence, substandard education, job insecurity, inadequate health care, stealth privatization of Social Security, failed campaign financing reform, and failed voter rights reform. Until we reverse our internal decay, America has little “soft power,” to use the phrase of Harvard Kennedy School Dean Joseph Nye, to change the minds and hearts of people throughout the world

Corporate-powered globalization is increasing income and wealth inequality, poverty and despair. The information revolution has created a growing digital divide between the computer literate with future opportunities and the computer illiterate without them. It follows that American foreign policy needs to reduce inequality and close the digital divide.

Terrorists require money, weapons, and people. A national security policy that rejects unilateral preemptive war and focuses more on terrorist organizations must

disrupt the flow of money and weapons. But the most vital resource is people. We need to reverse the despair in the impoverished villages of the world by combining economic and diplomatic solutions with military ones. Though the first suicidal attacks did not come from refugee camps, future waves may.

As a first step, as recommended by the Hart-Rudman Commission, the U.S. Agency for International Development should be integrated into a reorganized State Department—so aid can better be coordinated with the goals of economic development, poverty and inequality reduction, democracy building, and protection of human rights.

We then need to significantly change the sixteen-to-one ratio between Pentagon spending and spending for all other foreign operations. In terms of foreign aid, the United States ranks twentieth among the major countries. In terms of fulfilling a commitment made several years ago to fund the basic education of all children in the world by 2015, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden have received top marks for coming through with their promises. The United States flunked, coming in third from last among the twenty-two richest countries.

In 2000, the richest countries agreed to increase their foreign aid to a long-term target of seven tenths of one percent of their gross national products. For the richest countries combined, this amounts to about \$175 billion at today's income levels. If used effectively, these resources could substantially reduce, if not eliminate, the worst afflictions of poverty around the world. The money could control the great pandemic diseases of AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria; increase food productivity of impoverished farmers in the tropics; ensure that children are in school rather than at work; and enable poor households to obtain at least minimally acceptable access to safe drinking water, energy, and markets.

Yet, since 2000, the amount of American foreign aid remains the lowest as a percent of income in the entire donor world—about one-tenth of 1 percent of gross national product. Accordingly, the goal of a newly reorganized American foreign aid program within the Department of State should be to raise the level to the promised seven tenths of 1 percent.

Such a greatly enhanced aid program must structure more professional levels of accountability than at present. The traditional “top-down” economic development process should be overturned. It is more a creator of inequality than an engine of progress. Instead, we need to facilitate economic development that is “bubble up,” in part through a greatly expanded role for nongovernmental organizations indigenous to the nations being assisted. As Ralph Nader advocates in chapter 24, we need to facilitate the kind of great contributions of Pablo Freire, or of Hassan Fathy in showing illiterate Egyptian peasants how to build simple, elegant housing from the soil under their feet, or the microcredit successes of the Grameen Bank started by Mohammed Yunis in Bangladesh. A new era of energy renewability and solar energy should be created, as well.

Recent American policy naively has assumed that, over the last two decades, the priorities of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have led to prosperity and democracy. Yet, by any reasonable measures, they have not succeeded, argues Nader. They have promoted policies that cause poverty and inequality, harm the environment, and lead to the privatization of basic services, such as water provision. Global growth in the last twenty years has been half of what it was in the previous twenty years. Distribution of income *among* countries has worsened, and the evidence suggests that, by and large, the distribution of income and wealth *within* countries also has worsened. So, in terms of what any sensible evaluation would conclude, our present global development policy of socialism for the rich and free enterprise for the poor has not worked.

Doling out outrageous salaries, benefits, tax breaks, country club privileges, and travel expenses to employees, the IMF and World Bank are corrupt, ineffective, and wasteful—patent failures, condemned as such by more than a few internal critiques. For example, while he was chief economist at the World Bank, Joseph Stiglitz, who was soon to win a Nobel Prize and now is a professor at Columbia University, publicly criticized the IMF for worsening the situation of Indonesia, South Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines. With leadership from the White House and a State Department reorganized as proposed by the Hart-Rudman Commission, the IMF and World Bank should facilitate the same kind of bubble up rather than top-down economic development process needed by a reorganized State Department-located aid initiative.

Accompanying reformed economic development should be a program of capacity building in democracy—for countries that want democracy. That democracy should be free of the campaign finance corruption, inequality, and class warfare by the rich against the poor that is central to what the power elite in America call “democracy.” Democracy cannot be imposed, a lesson our young country has not yet learned.

Counterterrorism Policy in America Must Be Implemented With More Urgency. The United States today is scarcely more safe than on September 11. The federal government must move more rapidly and effectively to secure America from terrorists and invest its policy at home with the same degree of urgency it used to begin the unnecessary, resource-diverting invasion of Iraq. Short-run, middle-term, and long-run counterterrorism policies can be identified.

Here are just a few examples of short-run policy:

- The federal government needs to immediately implement a system of training and equipping local police, fire department staff, and local public and private health workers to respond to biological, chemical, nuclear, and other terrorist attacks. Federal financing is needed to significantly expand the numbers and quality of such personnel.

- In support of this training, the federal government needs to make federal watch lists and data bases much more available to state and local law enforcement agents—as well as to fire and health officials around the nation. Local responders to terrorist attacks need to be given much more intelligence from federal agencies, so they can better respond.
- The multiple points of American vulnerability to biological, chemical, nuclear, and other attacks must be systematically identified and eliminated. For example, we need to drastically step up inspection of the 21,000 shipping containers that enter our 361 ports every day. The United States now is spending \$200 million to \$300 million more on airport security, but shipping containers are a greater threat for weapons of mass destruction. The United States needs to do a better job of protecting energy distribution facilities like power plants, pumping stations, and pipeline compressor stations. We need improved protection of our water and food supplies.
- The federal government needs to move more quickly to protect the critical public and private infrastructure of America—the basic industries and systems on which our economy and society are based—including financial structures, communication systems, transportation systems, and energy production and distribution. Minimal progress has been made in protecting these systems.
- The White House and Congress should forcefully require the private sector to create, share, and cofinance vastly improved security to protect critical infrastructure industries. Legal barriers to cooperation among private sector entities should be removed. Corporations have been far too slow in response to the challenges.
- Organized citizens and responsible investigative media should demand accountability from national, state, and local leaders for how governments at all levels are making the population safer from terrorism and for the publication of independent cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness evaluations of progress or lack thereof.
- The FBI needs to better organize for counterterrorism and to ensure that field agent reports on terrorism are taken more seriously at headquarters in Washington. It needs to install state of the art computers and a staff capacity to analyze data on potential terrorism in the United States.

In the middle run, it is important to better assess the Patriot Act, hastily passed after September 11 through an aggressive White House campaign that misleadingly implied that opponents were unpatriotic and aligned with terrorists.

The act does solve an important problem identified by Coleen Rowley in chapter 30 (as well as by the 9/11 Commission): it removes procedural barriers that intelligence and criminal investigators believe prohibited them from sharing information, causing missed opportunities in unraveling plots. But it also permits federal

investigators to look at individuals' retail purchases, Internet searches, e-mail, and library usage, all without notification. It allows the U.S. attorney general to detain immigrants based on "suspicion," requires businesses to report "suspicious transactions," allows the government to conduct secret searches without notification, grants the FBI and other agencies greatly expanded access to all sorts of personal and business data with little judicial oversight, and allows for surveillance of any number of domestic organizations and advocacy groups.

Despite the many new powers the Patriot Act grants, a host of experts doubt whether it will actually succeed in reducing terrorist activity. For example, while the act permits the government to collect vast amounts of information, it does not provide the agencies involved the resources required to analyze it. As New York University law professor Stephen Schulhofer has observed, "A large part of what we lack [already] is not raw data but the ability to separate significant intelligence from 'noise.'"

Serious debate over these policies is only now emerging. Many are wary because the government is so secretive and because it has shown such bad judgment in so many policies, like being unable to confront militant Islam with something other than force.

At the same time, even greater powers of search and surveillance may be enacted. There also is talk of legislation that would change the historical prohibition in the United States against the military enforcing the laws of the land. The founders of America understood the threats to democracy posed by stationing full-time soldiers on the streets. Later legislation made clear that Congress understood the difference between protecting the nation from foreign attacks and policing our neighborhoods. Short of martial law, such military policing would be a mistake of enormous proportions. Instead, the National Guard—ordinary citizens on temporary leave—should be trained and equipped for homeland security operations when local and state law enforcement are not enough. This is the recommendation of the Hart-Rudman Commission.

Remember, too, that there are sunset clauses on about half the provisions of the Patriot Act. To determine whether to keep the provisions, we need an independent, nonpartisan commission, created by private sector foundations, to fund an assessment that determines the benefits of the act, asks whether the right people are targeted, inquires whether the American population is being protected, documents whether current provisions have the national and international support needed to succeed, and presents to the American taxpayer the costs of what we are doing, compared with the benefits.

In the longer run, America must systematically reform the FBI along the lines recommended by the 9/11 Commission and begin to resolve the decades-long failure of the FBI and the CIA to fully cooperate. The organizational changes being made to American intelligence agencies are only a small part of the solution. The

more important task is to make the FBI and the CIA run better. They cannot any longer be dominated by careerists who carefully try to manage their promotions and secure their retirement benefits. Regular infusions of professionals from spheres outside of the CIA and the FBI are needed. The priority at the FBI and CIA should be to secure higher quality managers, analysts, and agents.

Longer-run vision must cast off failed, supply-side privatizing ideology and use public funds to simultaneously improve both our national security and education systems. The world is experiencing an era of dramatic progress in bioscience, materials science, information technology, and scientific instrumentation. Being in the forefront of these and related fields will help fight terrorism abroad and at home—and create millions of new jobs in the process.

However, conservative privatizers have seriously underfunded public-sector-supported basic scientific research in recent years. As a result, the United States has started to lose its worldwide dominance in critical areas of science and innovation, according to federal and private experts who point to evidence like prizes awarded to Americans and the number of papers in major professional journals. Not surprisingly, the American education system has fallen behind other countries. Following the recommendations of the Hart-Rudman Commission, America consequently needs to double the federal research and development budget and to legislate a National Security, Science, and Education Act to generate sufficient numbers of researchers, engineers, scientists, and teachers in math and science. The act also should serve as a major federal response to soaring higher education tuition costs. Grants, not loans, should be provided to students from middle-class, working-class and impoverished families.

We also need to follow the recommendation of the Hart-Rudman Commission to reinvest in our public infrastructure and, in the process, eliminate our energy dependency on other nations. To meet this goal, the United States will need an increase in conventional energy production (more deep gas wells, for example); adoption of greater transportation efficiency standards; a graduated tax on carbon emissions; increased reliance on renewable energy sources, such as sun, wind, and water; and renewed research in alternatives, including hydrogen fuel cells. If developed wisely, these energy policies will not only help provide physical security but also economic security, through the creation of millions of jobs for the middle class, workers, and the truly disadvantaged.

Alternative American Middle East Policy

The struggle between America and Islam is not a “clash of civilizations” between East and West, to use the misleading and unconstructive language of the American government. Instead, the struggle that seriously threatens American is an ideological war *within* Islam. A radical Islamist faction is striking out at moderate Muslims and the West.

The United States first must acknowledge and understand the real nature of the struggle. It is more a battle of ideas than bombs. We are losing that war, as our policies in Iraq and Palestine create more and more antipathy in the Islamic world. To win the war of ideas, policy in Iraq and Palestine needs to be significantly altered. We cannot alter that policy without significant help from our moderate Muslim friends. Ideological and religious counterweights must be found to Osama bin Laden and the radical imams. The counterweights must carry on long after the death of bin Laden, because misdirected American policy has morphed al Qaeda and related movements into a hydra.

Within this framework, and with an eye to the foreign and national security policy principles in the preceding section, *Patriotism, Democracy, and Common Sense* sets out alternatives to present policy in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Palestine, and Israel.

Iraq and Afghanistan. Progress in Iraq should be based on withdrawal of Americans, multilateralization, provision of security, satisfaction of basic human needs, creation of grassroots democracy at the village level, and reconstruction of the economy, following the proposals of Ambassador Joseph Wilson in this book.

We have multilateralized Afghanistan. We need to multilateralize more, but the progress on multilateralism to date in Afghanistan at least provides a model for the process in Iraq. The imprimatur of the United Nations is needed in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

Beyond these first-priority countries, American policy needs to internationalize throughout the Middle East. Many benefits can accrue. Internationalization would first and foremost create a policy in the region that reflects a wide international consensus. At one level, giving the United Nations, the European Union, and the Arab League, just to name three major institutions, greater voice in the formulation of U.S. policy in the Middle East might complicate American efforts to bring about change in the region. It would increase the number of political actors that need to be consulted in making political decisions in Iraq and elsewhere in the Middle East. However, opening the process to other institutions would greatly simplify the work of the United States. Having to take seriously views to which we may have only given lip service in the past would require a more nuanced American foreign and national security policy sensitive to the people, history, and culture of each Middle East nation.

The United Nations must take over genuine authority in reconstructing Iraq politically and economically. The United Nations should not accept a scheme in which it tries to clean up the mess made by America while the United States still holds ultimate political control over Iraq. The United States should set a date for withdrawal of American troops *and* companies.

Human needs must be satisfied. People need water, food, access to medicine, access to medical treatment, medical insurance, new hospitals, new schools, provision of other public services, and social security when they are seniors. Reconstruction

must be based on action, not political rhetoric. Cash must be infused into the economy to allow people to buy goods. Economic reconstruction in manufacturing, oil production, and services must be financed. Iraq must control the means of production and the oil, not American corporations that make generous campaign contributions.

The United States needs to develop a more open and internationally oriented economic policy in the Middle East that does not merely privilege American firms and business interests. The most egregious example of American war profiteering can be found in Iraq, where contracts were awarded, sometimes without competitive bidding, to large firms that already had close ties to the American government, like Halliburton and Bechtel. At least thirty-two top officials in the American government served as executives or paid consultants to top weapons contractors entering government service. President Eisenhower's warning about the military-industrial complex has been ignored.

The populations of Afghanistan and Iraq must feel that they are safe in their own homes, can ride their bicycles, can walk or drive to where they have to go, and can do what they need to do without fear of bodily harm to them or their families. That has been accomplished in Kabul. It hasn't been accomplished in the Afghan countryside. To begin to make any progress in Iraq, we need United Nations Chapter 7-authorized peacekeepers and police trainers.

International institutions need to help Iraq reconstruct its defense and security apparatus. Iraq has a long border to protect. It has enemies who wanted to impose their views on Iraq long before America preemptively chose to do so. Those enemies will be there long after we have departed. Iraq needs a policing operation. It's a difficult country to govern, to say the least.

To the extent that any form of democracy is possible in Iraq, given America's success in uniting Shi'i and Sunnis in their common hatred toward us, we need to begin at the village level, as Ambassador Wilson observes. People in the village want to see the same sort of things that people in American communities want to see. They want to see the trash picked up, the kids going to safe schools, the education system functioning well, and the police working effectively to ensure their safety. The initial trainers in democracy building should be European, not American, and Iraqi trainers should take over as quickly as possible.

Iran. As Roger Owen reminds us in this book, the most important thing to observe about Iran is that it is in the middle of a hugely significant process of mutation from a kind of monolithic Islamic government to a pluralistic Islamic one. This is so important to the global history of the twenty-first century that it must be allowed to continue and to work its way through with the real prospect that this mutation will, over time, lead to a more secular pluralism with religion confined to the place where most people believe religion think ought to be, in the mosques but not in the offices of government.

Iranians have to be left alone to work things out for themselves. Unfortunately for them, and for the rest of the world, this not going to be an easy passage. There are the repercussions from the American government's talk about regime change. There is the proximity to Iraq, which means that, if things continue to go wrong in Iraq, they could spill over to Iran.

There is also, of course, the question of Iran's nuclear ambitions. Considerable consensus exists among Iranians that they should get themselves into a position where they could produce a bomb if that seemed vital for national self-defense. They live in a region with several nuclear powers already: Israel, Pakistan, and India. And the obvious lesson to be drawn from the different American policies towards Iraq and North Korea is the need to get quickly to a position where you can produce a bomb at short notice to preempt a potential American attack. America needs to be very, very careful and to develop a multilateral strategy that returns to the old notion of a nuclear-free Middle East. That, of course, raises the difficult problem of Israel's weapons of mass destruction. But solutions, however difficult, are possible, and we now turn to them.

Palestine and Israel. The core of Muslim hatred of America is our presidential leadership failure to create an equitable peace between Palestine and Israel. There is a direct link between security on Main Street America and peace in Palestine-Israel, a reality the American government and mainstream American media fail to communicate. Without a new plan that America facilitates but does not preemptively impose, terrorism against America is likely to continue.

In chapter 17, Chris Toensing, executive director of the Middle East Institute in Washington, D.C., articulates such a plan. It proceeds from several premises.

The first premise is that the fundamental obstacle to peace between Israel and the Palestinians is the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, an occupation which has been in place since the conclusion of the 1967 war.

The second premise is that, in the short to medium term, by far the best hope for a mutually satisfactory peace between Israel and the Palestinians remains the two-state solution, as envisioned by U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, whose language the United States helped to draft in 1967. This resolution and its successive follow-up resolutions proposed a state of Israel inside its pre-1967 borders, recognized by the Palestinians and Israel's Arab neighbors, and a state of Palestine in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Jerusalem would be the shared capital of both sides, Israel to the west and Palestine to the east. Israeli settlements in the occupied territories would have to be removed or rendered subject to Palestinian sovereignty.

The third premise is that Israeli policy is rendering achievement of the two-state solution increasingly difficult. Not only did the construction of West Bank settlements proceed at a furious pace during the course of the Oslo peace process of the 1990s, but Israel also constructed a series of bypass roads to link the settlements

to Israel proper. Together with Israeli military bases, the settlements and bypass roads have established a lattice of Israeli control over the territory of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip that can be exercised even when Israeli troops are not present in every square meter of that territory. The Israeli government is adding to this lattice of control by building a “security fence.” In some places, this “fence” is a complex of barbed wire and ditches; in other places, it is a twenty-five-foot-high, concrete, Berlin-like wall. At first, this wall roughly followed the 1967 armistice line, but subsequent phases of construction have made it encroach deep into the West Bank.

The fourth premise is that Israel and the Palestinians are very unlikely to reach a mutually satisfying peace accord on their own without significant external help. Hopelessness on both sides has created an extremely volatile situation, characterized on both sides by disturbing insensitivity to the suffering of the other.

Based on these premises, the United States must sponsor international intervention in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the form of an armed peacekeeping force, ideally dispatched by the United Nations, to be inserted into the occupied territories. This form of international intervention offers the best hope of enforcing the two-state solution relatively quickly, with a minimum of further loss of life on both sides. The peacekeepers would replace the Israeli army, which would withdraw from all of the occupied territories inside the pre-1967 borders of Israel. The peacekeepers should be invested with a political mandate as well as a security mandate.

The political mandate must adhere to a strict timetable set by the United Nations. There must be a peace at the end of the peace process. If such a time-delimited political mandate were firmly endorsed by the international community and backed by facilitating diplomacy (not unilateral dictates) by the United States, then public opinion on both sides could very well support final status negotiations aiming at the establishment of the two-state solution and the resolution of other outstanding issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Despite the lack of hope on both sides for a negotiated peace today, polls continue to show with great regularity that majorities of both Israelis and Palestinians continue to believe that negotiation is the only way to achieve peace and that the two-state solution is the best vision.

Should the negotiations determine that Israeli settlements were to be removed, U.N. peacekeepers might be required to stay and enforce their removal, as such a removal might be politically impossible for any Israeli government. Should the negotiations determine that Jewish settlements would remain as part of the state of Palestine, U.N. peacekeepers might be required to stay and protect both the settlers and Palestinian civilians from the attacks of extremists on both sides. That function, however, should be turned over to the Palestinian police as soon as possible.

U.N. intervention to ensure independence for East Timor makes for an interesting, if imprecise, comparison to the Palestinian situation today. As with the Palestinians, the world overwhelmingly supported East Timorese self-determination,

against the wishes of the occupying power, Indonesia, which at the time was heavily backed by Washington. The United States and Australia both resisted deployment of an international force to safeguard East Timorese independence because Indonesia did not accept it, the same reason that is always adduced for the American refusal to back proposals for an international presence in the occupied territories. Finally, though, reports from East Timor became so grim that the United States abruptly informed B. J. Habibie's government that aid was suspended. Three days later Jakarta relented, and today U.N. peacekeepers have successfully overseen East Timor's transition to statehood. The keys to the success of the East Timorese experiment were the very strict timetable and the clearly defined political goals.

American policy should support the rapid deployment of such a peacekeeping force in the occupied territories. The United States should not assume the task of peacekeeping itself. American intervention would have scant credibility among Palestinians, Arabs, and the international community.

However it comes about, any kind of peace settlement has to include a substantial component of economic aid from the United States and the international community. Large-scale economic aid is the most practical way to deal with the refugee issue. Most of the Palestinian refugees in the Arab world, particularly in Jordan, are very well integrated into the economy and even into politics. It is unlikely that they would want to come back. The same goes for the Palestinians living in Europe and America.

The refugees who will need to be resettled are many of those living in the occupied territories and those living in Lebanon. Lebanon has a horrible history of dealing with Palestinian refugees. Lebanese law forbids Palestinians from holding seventy kinds of jobs. This law essentially consigns Palestinians born in Lebanon to lives of menial labor or attempts to get out by any means they can find. Those refugees will need to be resettled in the course of a comprehensive peace settlement. The most logical course of action would be to resettle them in the territory of the future Palestinian state. That will require significant resources.

The economic codependency that once existed between Israelis and Palestinians has now gravely eroded, as Chris Toensing documents. Israel formerly relied upon Palestinian labor, particularly in such fields as construction, and Palestinians relied upon those jobs for their income. Those jobs, by Israeli state policy, have now been filled mostly with immigrants from South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Southeastern Europe. Even after peace breaks out, the new Palestinian areas will need substantial foreign aid and foreign investment to create job opportunities. Some of that will have to come from the Palestinian diaspora. Some of it will have to come from other places in the Arab world and some from the West.

Nowhere is the need for a humane and equitable American foreign aid program based on seven tenths of 1 percent of America's gross domestic product more pressing than in creation and development of the Palestinian state.

America, of course, has a very daunting political environment for the discussion of sane solutions. Conservatives do not want to do anything to jeopardize the Christian-right vote, Christian-right campaign contributions, a share of the Jewish vote, and Jewish campaign contributions. Democrats are equally reluctant to jeopardize the Jewish vote and Jewish campaign contributions.

However, most people in the American Jewish community do not feel represented by the major organizations that claim to represent their interests in Washington. The leaders of those organizations stake out positions considerably to the right of the consensus among the American Jewish community.

Similarly, the Christian right is more extreme in its views towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict than anything but a small minority of the American Jewish community. What is the basis of the position of American Christian conservatives? Here is one interpretation, by George Monbiot:

In the United States, several million people have succumbed to an extraordinary delusion. In the 19th century, two immigrant preachers cobbled together a series of unrelated passages from the Bible to create what appears to be a consistent narrative: Jesus will return to Earth when certain preconditions have been met. The first of these was the establishment of a state of Israel. The next involves Israel's occupation of the rest of its "biblical lands" (most of the Middle East), and the rebuilding of the Third Temple on the site now occupied by the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa mosques. The legions of the antichrist will then be deployed against Israel, and their war will lead to a final showdown in the valley of Armageddon. The Jews will either burn or convert to Christianity, and the Messiah will return to Earth.

Monbiot claims that perhaps 15 percent of American voters belong to churches or movements that subscribe to these teachings. They are a major political constituency that represents a significant proportion of the conservative core vote. For these people, aggression to secure the Holy Land is a personal, religious issue, not a remote foreign policy.

But the radical right does not have an unbreakable grip on public opinion when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and certainly not on American Jewish opinion, which supports a two-state solution and is mostly antagonistic to the settlements. To better inform American public opinion on alternatives like the plan here, a major campaign is needed to address the typically shallow and deficient reporting of the Middle East in mainstream America media. A reform movement would do well to build on new websites like Electronic Iraq.

Alternative Economic Policy

Following American public opinion in national polls, alternative economic policy needs to rescind the recent tax cuts for the rich and legislate demand-side tax cuts

for the middle class, workers, and the truly disadvantaged—all of whom need a Fair Economic Deal. The Deal should provide average Americans economic security against the class warfare of the rich, just as they need physical security against terrorists and criminals. Tax cuts for average Americans should be complemented by increased federal support to students seeking postsecondary education and by demand-side investments in public infrastructure, national security, the reconstruction of the inner city, and new high tech sectors, including alternative energy. As a result, millions of public and private sector jobs will be created. A federal revenue sharing program must stop the financial hemorrhaging of state and local government. The public sector must finance a sound Social Security and Medicare systems, while a new National Medical Defense system should ensure that everyone has health insurance. To stabilize America's international financial position, we need to rethink our present commitment to the free-trade system.

What Do the People Say? In recent polls, 88 percent of Americans believed the budget deficit is a "serious" or "very serious" problem. Some 58 percent thought tax cuts should be targeted to middle-income and low-income people, and 40 percent more thought taxes should be distributed equally for all income brackets. That means 98 percent of the people disagreed with tax cuts going mostly to the wealthy. Some 67 percent of the American people in an ABC News-*Washington Post* poll preferred to have more spending on needs like education and health care, rather than on tax cuts for the rich. Three times as many Americans say they want to be in a labor union than are in a union. 64 percent said it is the federal government's responsibility to make sure all Americans have health insurance. More than half said the government should create a plan to cover everyone, even if it requires a tax increase on them. Polls also have shown public opinion support for financially sound Social Security and Medicare systems and rejection of privatization.

Rescind Tax Cuts for the Rich. Following these priorities of average citizens instead of the agenda of the ruling class, alternative economic policy needs to rescind the tax cuts for the rich and lower taxes for the middle class, workers, and the poor.

Rescission of tax cuts for the rich should be based on precedents from the 1980s, when many such tax cuts were rescinded after average Americans were fully informed of the negative impact on them. After rescission, the longer-run goal should be to reduce welfare for corporations, what Kevin Phillips in the foreword calls the "socialization of economic risk" for the ruling classes. With an eye to Thomas Jefferson's warning against the antidemocratic "aristocracy of our moneyed corporations," the United States needs to return corporate taxes to the levels in force during the Eisenhower administration. We also need to increase the top marginal tax rate for the super-rich to about 50 percent. This would still be far below the top marginal income tax rate of 91 percent during the Eisenhower administration.

Repealing the tax cuts given to the super-rich would return more than \$85 billion per year from the richest 5 percent of the population. Returning to corporate

tax rates in force during the Eisenhower administration could increase tax revenues by roughly \$110 billion more per year. Returning to a 50 percent top marginal income tax rate far below the top rate in the Eisenhower administration could capture as much as \$90 billion more per year from the richest 2 percent of the population.

At the same time, we should provide tax cuts to the hard-working 150 million workers who are struggling because they can't afford to buy all they need. Millionaires don't need additional spending money. Workers, middle-class Americans, and the poor do. Their spending will stimulate the economy more effectively, help businesses, and be more fair to the Americans who need fairness the most. There is ample economic evidence that putting money in the pockets of average Americans stimulates the economy much more than further lining the pockets of the rich.

Through these tax costs, the overall economic vision of America needs to return to the demand side and to the robust, full-employment economy that characterized much of the 1990s. A demand-side policy should extend unemployment assistance to the jobless and raise the minimum wage. A living wage is a very important way to assure that lower-income American households have adequate resources. Likewise, the earned income tax credit is a proven, effective model for fighting poverty. It should be protected and expanded. We also need to reverse policies that have made it increasingly difficult for unions to organize in the private sector.

Economic Security: Protection from the Ruling Classes. But demand-side strategies are only part of alternative economic policies. Just as average citizens need physical security to protect them from terrorists and criminals, so they need economic security to protect them from the class warfare launched in America by the rich.

As Jeff Faux observes, it has become a cliché in America that workers must adjust to being churned through many companies, none of which will provide a secure working life. As a result, most workers are in constant anxiety about their economic condition, as companies under pressure from brutally competitive markets abandon responsibility for health care, pensions, and job security.

In addition to unemployment, the American economy contains a great deal of underemployment among wage earners and middle-class citizens. Many wage-earning and middle-class families need two people working to make ends meet. Today, there are almost five million Americans who are working part-time but who need full-time employment. Many are working in low-skilled, dead-end jobs. Many family providers have zero health coverage. The poor always have been worried about decent child care, affordable housing, and enough money to send their kids to college. But today most wage-earning and middle-class families have similar worries.

A Fair Economic Deal. To address the need for economic security, a Fair Economic Deal should be launched that serves a broad middle-class, working-class, and lower-class constituency. The constituency should recapture some of the national mood that existed after World War II, when Americans sought to build more inclusive, equitable society, one in which everyone had a fair chance of making it.

What story or message might update that post–World War II American feeling and build the new economic alliance for the twenty-first century? Here are some words around which to rally:

You, the average citizen, are not alone in your search for a safe niche in the I-win-you-lose world. The very rich have profited at the expense of the families of salaried and working people of America. It is not fair for the rich to get richer at the expense of the rest of us. Power has shifted so significantly toward those at the top of the income and wealth pyramid that the majority of Americans who are struggling must mobilize to force the rich and the elites back to the bargaining table. We must close the income, wage, and job gaps.

Americans deserve a higher quality of life. We must invest in the human capital of all of our citizens, so all can deal successfully with technological change and the global economy. The role of the federal government must be to make investments that serve the interests of the salaried and working classes, along with the poor.

The need for a Fair Economic Deal and complementary alternative policies must be better communicated to the American people in practical, commonsense ways. We need more efforts to “personalize” the impact on the daily lives of ordinary Americans of the type of policy choices discussed in this chapter and to bring to life the federal disinvestment that our citizens face if the nation does not change course.

Public Infrastructure Creation and Economic Klondikes. Historically, the public sector has been pivotal for ensuring that economic growth benefits all, services are provided to all who need them, and new jobs are created. Public-sector job stimulation is a countercyclical policy. But the public sector also is the generator of medium- and long-term seed capital that forges the direction the economy takes and creates millions of jobs in the process.

Public infrastructure investment has shaped America’s future. Early on, public investment built canals and subsidized the railroads to settle the West. Government financed the first assembly lines. President Eisenhower began building the interstate highway system in the 1950s. Federal investments developed the jet engine, began the exploration of space, and helped develop silicon chips, the computer, and the Internet.

Each of these public sector investment programs created jobs and businesses in the short term. In the long run, they spun off technological advances that became what economist Robert Heilbroner calls economic “Klondikes”—massive veins of private investment opportunities that have been the building blocks of American prosperity.

Other nations have invested hundreds of billions in public-sector infrastructure over recent years, such as the high-speed rail systems in France and parallel investments in Germany and Japan. Yet public-sector infrastructure investment has declined precipitously under supply-side ideology, beginning in the 1980s under President Reagan. Today, the United States is the only major industrial society not expanding its public infrastructure.

On September 11 and thereafter, America has paid the price—through, for example, a woeful airport security system unprepared for biological, chemical, and nuclear attacks. Here is a starting point for public investments that both create meaningful jobs for unemployed or underemployed Americans and address an urgent national need. A related public-sector, job-creating investment is development of a high-speed train system for the United States. A recent *USA Today* poll found that 47 percent of plane travelers thought flying the most stressful form of transport, but only 2 percent of train passengers found that travel was stressful. Yet our public rail system has been allowed to atrophy by our leaders.

Nowhere is public infrastructure more in need of repair and reinvestment than in America's cities and inner cities. A commitment to redevelop inner cities also represents the best way to bridge the growing racial and digital divides. Schools are in massive need of repairs. We need computer-smart urban mass-transit systems. The National Housing Act of the 1930s, with its commitment to housing as a human right, has been ignored by supply-siders. That policy failure can be reversed by new public investment to repair and build housing for the poor, with the work done by nonprofit community development corporations and YouthBuild USA, which can employ thousands.

To complement physical inner-city infrastructure development, the public sector needs to invest in human capital. For example, as Carnegie Corporation reports have shown, a key to inner-city school reform is more and better-trained teachers, assisted by youth-development workers. Hundreds of thousands of additional, well-trained preschool and after-school professionals are needed.

Note, too, that it is difficult to outsource public infrastructure and public service jobs.

A federal seed-capital commitment to forge economic growth in new directions should, as well, create new jobs in a continuously evolving host of high-tech sectors—including enhanced electronic digital imaging (needed by our intelligence agencies, as discussed above), ceramics, advanced composition sensors, photonics, artificial intelligence, robotics (which the Japanese are using to help care for their large senior population), advanced computer-assisted manufacturing, biotechnology, and research and development to find cures for cancer, Parkinson's disease, AIDS, other serious diseases, and the common cold.

The politics of the Middle East could change significantly if the United States became serious about developing electric cars and sources of energy other than petroleum. Even the Pentagon has admitted the threats posed by global warming, and America is in desperate need of a real environmental protection program. With the aging of baby boomers, there is a pressing need for creative advances in institutional and in-home health care. Public seed capital and leadership would address these significant American dilemmas, while creating millions of meaningful jobs for the middle class, working class, and the disadvantaged.

Federal seed capital job creation must be matched by a federal system of job training and human capital investment. It is an epic scandal that America has no such system. As part of reform, federal aid to higher education must respond to rapidly rising college tuition costs. And people who already have graduated and have lost jobs need to be retrained for newly emerging opportunities.

Local Government, Social Security, Medicare, and National Medical Defense. The federal government needs to enact a program of revenue sharing, and perhaps also loan guarantees, to stop the current, destructive hemorrhaging of state and local public services. The hemorrhaging has been made worse by stealth conservative block grant schemes that place greater and greater burdens on localities. We must permit local governments to maintain their services and to avoid regressive tax increases. Reduced services and regressive tax increases both tend to undermine the functioning of the economy as a whole.

The radical right wants eventual privatization of the cash flows associated with both Social Security and Medicare. The plan is a bit like the Cheshire cat, except that it's not smiling. Sometimes you can see it, and sometimes you can't, depending on whether it is politically expedient and when the next election will occur. But it is essential that we stop movement toward privatization of Social Security and Medicare, on the merits of those two programs alone. Our elderly will continue to be with us, of course, and their numbers will continue to increase. So the only real issue here is whether we provide for them in a way that is fair to them.

Universal health coverage needs to be enacted as a human right. Some 44 million Americans don't have health insurance. But health insurance also must be framed as a response to September 11, as the best way to combat biological warfare. After all, people without health insurance tend to delay trips to the doctor or the emergency room. Yet if we want to prevent an outbreak of smallpox, or anything worse, as a result of bioterrorism, we need people to get medical attention right away. Micah Sifry makes this observation in chapter 37. As it is, most hospitals in major American cities go on lockdown on any number of nights a week. They refuse all emergencies because they already are beyond capacity. That is a crisis that no one is talking about, but it could make a huge difference if we try to resolve it now.

Health reform, then, should be packaged not as "universal health care" or "single payer." We should call it National Medical Defense. For short, we might call it "Star Wards," as Sifry suggests. A National Medical Defense system must crack down on drug prices and health maintenance organization administrative costs.

Stabilizing America's International Financial Position. To stabilize our international financial position, we need a new set of institutions that permit our exports to grow rapidly. That will mean giving up claims to international debt payments in much of Africa and Latin American countries like Argentina and Brazil.

We may even have to rethink our commitment to the free-trade system. If we realistically assess the cost, and if it turns out that we cannot find a way to reconcile a commitment to full employment, America may need to choose full employment over free trade, as a last resort. While other countries eagerly encourage American multinational corporations to relocate, they fiercely protect their own domestic industries primarily through the use of tariffs—taxes on imported goods—and through the strict regulation of imported labor. America should at least debate the merits of doing the same, especially when our policies help support dictatorships like communist China.

Alternative Domestic Policy

The prime beneficiaries of a Fair Economic Deal that includes greatly improved job security, education security, health care security and Social Security are those other than the rich. The middle class is needed to win elections, and so a Fair Economic Deal must be especially in sync with its priorities. While benefiting mightily from a Fair Economic Deal, working people and the truly disadvantaged, especially those living in inner cities and aging suburbs, have additional needs. *Patriotism, Democracy and Commonsense* looks at those needs.

The key to policy for the poor and workers, virtually unreported in mainstream corporate media, is that we already know a lot about what works, enough to create a domestic policy that is supported by public opinion and that also will help project a more successful American foreign policy.

What Works. Recent public policy and a gullible mainstream media have helped promote the notion that little works for the truly disadvantaged.

That is not true. Since the Kerner Riot Commission and Eisenhower Violence Commission of the 1960s, we have learned a great deal about what doesn't work and what does work, based on scientific studies and careful evaluations. It therefore would make sense to stop doing what doesn't work and start investing in what does work, at "a scale equal to the dimensions of the problem," to quote the Kerner Commission.

Common sense coincides with the conclusions of most experts that we need a continuum of interventions from early childhood through adulthood. Here are just a few examples.

Building on some of the evaluations described earlier, a recent state-by-state study by the RAND Corporation demonstrated that access to preschool increases student achievement, especially in impoverished communities. The benefits that accrue to a child who has preschool include less involvement in crime, less involvement in drugs, less involvement in teen pregnancy, more likelihood to complete school, and more likelihood to become economically independent. So preschool makes economic sense. HeadStart and Early Start need to be made available to all eligible poor kids.

For inner city public school children beginning in kindergarten, the *Turning Points* studies of the Carnegie Council and researchers like Joy Dryfoos have shown that, to successfully replicate what works, we need to

- Improve teacher training
- Reduce classroom size
- Restructure academic programs to focus on a core of common knowledge and skills
- Place policy for each inner-city school in the hands of a local management team, led by the principal and including teachers, parents, counselors, and other school staff
- Dramatically increase the involvement of and assistance to inner-city parents
Provide focused intervention by a mental health team for children with emotional, behavioral, or academic problems
- Create safe environments during the school day
- Create full-service community schools, in which nonprofit organizations are located in the building to provide health, family, community, cultural, and recreational initiatives and to ensure security

In addition, after-school safe havens have proven their worth, based on evaluations by Columbia University, Public-Private Ventures, the Eisenhower Foundation, and many others. Evolving from the formative Carnegie Corporation report, *A Matter of Time* in 1992, safe havens have become known as places where kids can go after school for help with their homework, snacks, social support, and discipline from adult and “near peer” role models.

For high schoolers, a good example of success is the Ford Foundation–initiated Quantum Opportunities program, based on computer learning. Well-trained adult mentors work one-on-one with inner-city high school youth, keeping them on track to good grades and high school completion, working out ways to earn money in the summer, and providing venues for college education, if youth so choose. A key to success is sufficient investment per youth, based on recent evaluations.

When young people do drop out of high school, we know that there are alternatives to the failed, supply-side Job Training Partnership Act that can get them back on track. These are “training first” initiatives, not “work first.” Based on decades of evaluations, the Great Society Job Corps program is perhaps the best example of successful job training for youth. Other examples that have had positive evaluations include YouthBuild USA nationally, the Argus Learning for Living Center in the South Bronx, and the Center for Employment and Training in San Jose, California.

Many of the jobs for people who receive training first can be generated by community development corporations in the private nonprofit sector. Community development corporations were the brainchild of Robert Kennedy’s Mobilization

for Youth in the late 1960s. Initially, there were ten such community development corporations. Now there are thousands.

The capital for community development corporations often can be secured via community-based banking. Here one model is the South Shore Bank in Chicago. Many banks will redline and will not bother with branches in the inner city. When they do, typically a bank will use the savings of inner-city residents to make investments outside of the neighborhood. South Shore does just the opposite. It uses the savings of the poor to reinvest in the inner-city neighborhoods where the poor live. And South Shore still makes a profit. Yet there is no interest by the federal government in replicating this stellar model to scale and no investigative reporting by the media to expose the failure.

Community-based banking investments in inner-city neighborhoods can be secured through community-based, problem-oriented policing—getting officers out of their cruisers and into foot patrols. They work shoulder-to-shoulder with citizen groups to focus on specific neighborhood problems and solve them with sensitive efficiency. In some variations, officers mentor youth. The Police Executive Research Forum and other institutions have undertaken evaluations which have yielded positive outcomes. More community support is generated than with racist, “zero-tolerance” policing methods.

Multiple Solutions. These examples of what works interrelate, or can be made to interrelate, through a wise national policy for the inner city and the truly disadvantaged. For example, community-based, problem-oriented policing can help secure a neighborhood. The security can help encourage community-based banking. Community-based banking can provide capital for community development corporations. Community development corporations can invest that capital in ways that generate good jobs for local residents. Inner-city youth can qualify for those jobs if they have been in job training like Job Corps, YouthBuild USA, Argus, and the Center for Employment and Training. Similarly, inner-city youth can stay in high school if they have been involved in human capital investments like Quantum Opportunities. They can get that far if they have been in full service community schools and after-school safe havens. And they can get that far if they have been in Headstart/Early Start preschool.

In sum, when you ask what works based on scientific studies and careful evaluations, you see what Lisbeth Schorr, at the Harvard University School of Public Health, calls “multiple solutions to multiple problems.” The solutions are not single, narrow, and categorical. The solutions are creative, comprehensive, and interdependent. Yet there is almost a total absence of federal government interest in and mainstream media investigative reporting on the potential of such multiple solutions.

National Policy. Elsewhere, the Eisenhower Foundation has estimated that a national policy for the truly disadvantaged that is based on what works, begins to replicate multiple solutions to scale, and has a national impact would have an initial

annual cost that is less than the \$87 billion supplemental appropriation for Iraq that was approved not long ago. As part of a Fair Economic Deal, such a national policy would, first and foremost, be based on replicating inner-city public school and job training successes—and then on generating jobs through investment in America’s public infrastructure, significant enhancement of transportation and health facilities to enhance national security, research and development investment in high-tech industries, reconstruction of inner city housing, and reconstruction of inner city schools.

This priority on education and job training means scrapping present “welfare reform.” We need to start over. Instead of political misleads that claim to measure success in terms of reduced caseloads, we need to be more honest and measure success in terms of the original goal of welfare: reducing poverty. Poverty should be defined following recent recommendations by the National Research Council and the “self-sufficiency standard” created by Diana Pearce (above). Local programs that reduce poverty, so defined, should be rewarded. Reformed “welfare reform” programs needs to combine job training, quality job creation, job placement, job retention, health insurance, high-quality child care, and high-quality transportation services.

To complement a policy of full employment and public education reform to scale, we need racial and criminal justice reform. New policy should begin with

- Replication to scale of positively evaluated models of school integration (as in St. Louis) and housing integration (like the Gatreux program begun in Chicago)
- Continuation of affirmative action (justified by RAND Corporation and other studies that have measured success)
- Creation of a presidential commission to review the racial-and-gender-biased “concrete ceiling” hiring practices of Wall Street and major corporations, followed by a presidential commitment to break through that ceiling
- Elimination of the racial disparity in drug sentencing
- Reallocation of spending by the failed “war on drugs” from 70 percent law enforcement and 30 percent treatment to a ratio closer to 50-50

Federal and local policy should significantly shift away from prison building and toward cheaper, more effective treatment alternatives in the community, following existing, taxpayer-approved models in, for example, the state of Arizona. Interrelated models of success like the national Delancey Street program for the reintegration of ex-offenders, drug courts, and community courts should be replicated to scale. A National Sentencing and Drug Treatment Commission should be formed to review federal and state sentencing practices, the impact of recent sentencing trends on the fiscal health and public responsibilities of state and federal governments, the impact on serious crime, and the feasibility of a broad range of alternatives. The commission

should gather evidence on promising alternatives, including innovations in other nations that have kept their levels of incarceration and crime low by American standards.

Foundations should increase funding to national and local nonprofit organizations and other citizens groups to educate the citizenry on the need for state-based and local-based initiatives against firearms; local alliances between city residents and more conservative “soccer mom” suburbanites in the wake of Columbine-type killings of youth in our schools; litigation against firearms manufacturers; a national handgun licensing system; a federal ban on Saturday night specials; and federal regulation of firearms as consumer products.

Public Opinion. There is considerable public opinion support for this domestic and inner city agenda. For example, the need for new employment policies is high in every poll on the concerns of citizens. A majority of eligible voters favors job training, college student aid, and Head Start. Some 71 percent say educational improvement should focus on reforming existing public school systems, and 75 percent favor improving public schools over providing vouchers. About 70 percent are willing to pay more in taxes if the money went to education, and 84 percent would pay more in taxes if the money went specifically to raising teachers’ salaries, reducing class size, fixing run-down schools, improving security, and putting more computers in classrooms. The public is largely supportive of alternative sentencing, particularly for nonviolent criminals, and has a strong commitment to treatment and rehabilitation. Studies show that people appreciate the advantages of offering alternative sentencing options and that they believe it creates a fair, more just system, one which allows judges to evaluate each offender individually.

Domestic Policy as a Tool for Foreign Policy. This domestic policy needs to be framed not just as replicating what works “to a scale equal to the dimension of the problem” as envisioned by the Kerner Riot Commission but also as a way of carrying out the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, by showing the world that America can fulfill its promise and therefore is a nation to trust, respect, and emulate.

Alternative Media Policy

Until recently, conventional wisdom has been that, while media are important to our democracy, the public cannot be engaged in reform because the issues are too abstract.

However, during the last several years, a movement to democratize the media has emerged. It began with corporate power and media ownership. The chairman of the Federal Communications Commission sought federal rule changes to allow a single network to control more television stations around the country. The rule

changes also sought to allow a single media company to control more of a local media market. A coalition of strange bedfellows—from the National Rifle Association and William Safire to MoveOn.org and Noam Chomsky—lobbied against the changes. The ultimate outcome of the battle is still uncertain. But the media-reform movement is here to stay. We are at a period of time comparable to 1886, when the eight-hour day came into place, or to the early twentieth century, when Republican President Teddy Roosevelt attacked the power, corruption, and greed of huge corporations.

Led by the nonprofit organization Free Press, and its website, MediaReform.org, the emerging movement has recognized, as did the conservatives after the defeat of Barry Goldwater in 1964, that reform must be based on a balance between media control and media policy. Media policy advocacy needs to evolve from high-tech models like MoveOn.org in the United States and *OhMyNews* in South Korea as well as from person-to-person models like Jim Hightower's Rolling Thunder Down-Home Democracy Tour.

Media Control. In terms of control, the need is for new radio networks to counter false claims by the far right. We also need more television programs like *NOW with Bill Moyers* and new journalism that provides democratic alternatives to the right-wing ideology of people like Rush Limbaugh and Gordon Liddy, the conservative ideology of Fox News and Clear Channel radio, and the content of mainstream journalism.

As described in this book, a premiere model for alternative media is the national, daily Pacifica network grassroots news program hosted by Amy Goodman, *Democracy Now*. After September 11, *Democracy Now* became a television radio show, broadcasting on over 150 stations around the country. *Democracy Now* is expanding the number of National Public Radio stations which carry it and broadcasting on public-access television, a much-underutilized resource. Presently, people in a community often don't even know that they have public access. The Pacifica network is proceeding from community to community and reminding people that they have these channels. Media activists lobby their city councils, and council members see the channels written into local agreements. As a result, the councils become energized. This energy needs to be promoted, so that public access becomes a cornerstone for people's media.

Media Policy. In terms of media policy reform, here is a partial list of initiatives, building on the recommendations of Robert McChesney and John Nichols in chapter 31:

- Federal antitrust policy must be reassessed. Because competition and diversity have been under assault for more than two decades, the impact of media mergers on democracy needs to be closely examined. Caps on media ownership, appropriate for a democracy, should continue to be advocated, building on the opposition to the FCC ownership rulings of recent years.

- Congress should roll back the number of radio stations a single corporation can own. Advocacy is needed for Congress to pass legislation prohibiting media cross-ownership and vertical integration. There are tremendous economic benefits to media conglomerations, but they accrue almost entirely to the media owners. The public loses out.
- Citizen advocates must continue to reinvigorate the regulatory process. As FCC commissioner Michael J. Copps has observed, “Most people do not even know that they can challenge the renewal of a local radio or television station if they believe that the station is not living up to its obligation due to a lack of local coverage, a lack of diversity, excessive indecency and violence, or other concerns important to the community.”
- Foundations need to greatly expand media training to senior staff of national and local nonprofit organizations, including training for how to be effective on television and funding for communications directors.
- Nonprofit organizations must be given access to low-power FM radio station licenses. Expansion of access was promised several years ago. But a backroom deal in Congress reneged on that promise. Tax incentives should be created to aid in the development of new, community-based, noncommercial broadcasting outlets.
- Foundations must provide much greater support to schools on the cutting edge of media reform, like the Columbia School of Journalism, to produce better trained, more informed journalists and to support more widespread dissemination of leading journals, such as the Columbia Journalism Review.
- A new wave of grassroots advocacy is needed to fight for dramatic expansion of public broadcast funding. Only about 15 percent of funding for public radio and television comes from federal subsidies. What funding does come from Congress is subject to great political pressures. Public broadcasting at the federal and state levels has the potential to provide a model of quality journalism and diversified cultural programming. But that won’t happen if cash-starved Public Broadcasting System and National Public Radio outlets are required, as some propose, to rely on the same sort of offensive thirty-second spot advertising that dominates commercial broadcasting.
- Broadcasters must be forced to give candidates free air time. Senators John McCain and Russell Feingold, the authors of the only meaningful campaign-finance reform legislation of the past decade, have proposed such a requirement. The link between campaign-finance reform and media reform must be communicated to the public and acted upon. Media conglomerates now are among the most powerful lobbyists against both campaign-finance reform and media reform. The system works for them, but fails the rest of us.
- Campaigns must be organized to block international trade deals that allow media conglomerates to impose their will on the citizens of the United States

and other countries. Media firms now are lobbying the World Trade Organization and other multilateral organizations to accept a system of trade sanctions against countries that subsidize public broadcasting, limit foreign ownership of media systems, or establish local content standards designed to protect national and regional cultures. They want similar assaults on regulation inserted into the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas. Congress should not pass trade agreements that undermine its ability to aid public broadcasting, but should protect media diversity and competition.

- Policies that affect the Internet, such as copyright and access, must carefully be scrutinized. Reforms must be enacted that prevent corporate monopoly control. It is important to recognize that already three corporations control about half of the web's traffic patterns.
- The media-reform movement must, on a broader scale, address what ails existing media. Top-heavy with white, middle-class males, television news departments and major newspapers remain beholden to official sources. Their obsessive focus on "if it bleeds, it leads" crime coverage, entertainment "news," and celebrity trials leaves no room to cover the thousands of programs that work at the neighborhood level and the real issues that affect families, communities, and whole classes of people. Coverage of minority communities, women, working people, rural folks, youth, seniors, and just about everyone else who doesn't live in a handful of ZIP codes in New York, Washington, and Los Angeles is badly warped, or almost nonexistent, and reinforces conservative ideology that helps shape public discourse and public policy.
- Thousands of grassroots, community-based, inner-city nonprofit organizations need to become a coordinated force, based on their being trained in communications and media. Grassroots nonprofits need to be funded by foundations to bring on their own communications directors (few have them) and to generate strategic communications plans. Inner-city groups should learn to communicate to the public what their own programs are about and, through this public education, help raise funds and become more self-sufficient.

The MoveOn.org Model. MoveOn.org illustrates the kind of dynamic, courageous, financially self-sufficient organization that can both advocate for these kinds of policy reforms and successfully fight for more control of media by those proposing alternatives to present policy.

MoveOn.org has over two million members. They propose issue priorities and strategies via Action Forum software. The most strongly supported issues rise to the top through democratic voting processes, not unilateral dictates, and these become MoveOn's organizational, action, and advocacy priorities.

Many of MoveOn's experiments are being morphed. Other organizations, such as America Votes, America Coming Together, the Media Fund, and the Thunder

Road Group, are innovating on MoveOn's themes. For example, during the 2004 presidential primaries, there was experimentation with a whole array of online organizing techniques that could change the way campaigns run in the future. Some campaigns had online groups of designers and content producers who essentially were unofficial media teams. They created posters, flyers, and many other things—again in a very decentralized kind of way and in support of alternative policies like those in *Patriotism, Democracy, and Common Sense*.

Similarly, during the 2004 general election, coalitions of advocacy organizations, including MoveOn, raised funds via the Internet for media ads, then created the ads, aired them in targeted states, led get-out-the-vote campaigns, undertook polling research, and organized rapid-response teams on key issues. We need more and more of such coalitions to harness our energy and make an impact. We need to refine strategic online advocacy to mobilize people, send petitions, pressure leaders, and organize events.

Whether focused on specific campaigns for political office or on issue advocacy outside political campaigns, MoveOn has pioneered in identifying and sharing with wide audiences the misinformation that is spread by officeholders pursuing failed policies as well as the conservative ideology machine and right-wing media who defend those policies. For example, as Eli Pariser discusses in chapter 32, MoveOn has begun the Daily Mislead (www.mislead.org), which e-mails its members each day, by noon, false information emanating from the executive branch of government.

Similarly, MoveOn is developing a network that allows people to self-organize around media inaccuracies. Using volunteers, MoveOn seeks to keep the extreme right honest by allowing people to report egregious statements that are read and heard in the mainstream media, verify them through a volunteer infrastructure, and then draw on a network of experts who can contact the journalists involved. At the same time, grassroots contingents can complain locally about biased and misleading commentary.

MoveOn also has created Fox Watch (www.AmericanPolitics.com/foxwatch), which utilizes thousands of Americans who monitor the distortions, fabrications, and propaganda of Fox News. Does that mean that Fox News is going to change overnight? No. But what may be possible over the next few years is to make Fox increasingly seen as simply an ideological, knee-jerk network rather than a credible source of mainstream news.

Mobile Phone Technology. In the future, the potential exists for better interfacing MoveOn.org's Internet-based advocacy with mobile phone technology, as explained in these pages by Howard Rheingold. The kinds of alternative foreign policies set forth in *Patriotism, Democracy, and Common Sense* already have been advocated in demonstrations against the Iraq war using the mobile phones to organize quickly and well. The BBC set up a web site in which people could, from their telephones, take pictures of the huge demonstrations in London and elsewhere. The photos were

sent to the BBC, which then posted them. This was, literally, street-level reporting, the beginning of an alternative to CNN.

Mobile phone technology interfaced with the Internet has even more potential in get-out-the-vote strategies and tactics. For example, in the election in Korea not long ago, the man who eventually won, now President Roh, was behind in the polls a few days before the vote. Roh's supporters turned to *OhMyNews*, a kind of citizen news. People submit stories through the Internet and then vote on which stories are placed prominently. It is very popular with the young cyber generation, who were demonstrating against the American presence in Korea. Using *Ohmynews*, the Internet, and text messaging, they organized a get-out-the-vote surge in the last couple of days that made the difference. The organizers were the first people the new president thanked after he was elected.

The Korean example suggests that, to better communicate alternatives to present policy, we in America need to facilitate a multitude of citizen journalist-activists. Funded by foundations, local and national nonprofit institutions need to train citizens in investigative journalism, fact checking, blogging technology, mobile phone technology linked to the Internet, the *OhMyNews* model, collective action, the organization of peace demonstrations, the organization of election campaigns, and the implementation of get-out-the-vote drives for citizens who support alternative policies. How-to handbooks for best practices need development and electronic distribution. More services are necessary that enable more people to form groups online. Nationwide, face-to-face workshops need to proliferate and systematically teach people how to use the electronic tools available.

Rolling Thunder. To improve communication among advocates for alternatives, and between them and other citizens, we need not just technology but person-to-person organizing for alternatives at the grassroots. One of the best examples is the Rolling Thunder Down-Home Democracy Tour organized by author, radio talk show host, commentator and activist Jim Hightower, a contributor to this volume.

The Hightower Rolling Thunder Down-Home Democracy Tour gives people a chance to hold "democracy fests" around the country. They last all day long. Speeches are mercifully brief and accompanied by music. Food is provided by local restaurants and community groups. The citizen groups get people to sign petitions. There is a mobilization tent where people can take a dozen different actions right there, that day. Hightower collects everybody's e-mail addresses and feeds them to organizations like MoveOn.org. There are many fun things to do, including a "dunk-a-lobbyist" booth.

The idea is to get people together, let them rub elbows with each other, let them learn that they have a lot in common, and get them to continue on together. Part of the good news is that they do continue. For example, there are potluck dinners on one side of town, then another side, and then another side. The goal is to keep the discussion building, forging action coalitions at the grassroots level.

Rolling Thunders have been held across the nation. They need to be expanded and made a permanent part of the activist landscape and integrated with similar efforts, like the “Wellstone Camps” begun by the late Senator Paul Wellstone to train activists.

HOW CAN THE PEOPLE MOVE AMERICA FROM FAILURE TO SUCCESS?

Democratic power is not given. It has to be taken, aggressively defended, and retaken when it slips from our hands, for the moneyed powers relentlessly press to gain supremacy and assert their private will over the majority.

By leveling the playing field so that elections are based not on money but on what is best for most Americans, clean-money campaign finance reform and voter’s rights reform can help facilitate the alternative policies discussed in this volume.

Clean Money Elections

Arizona and Maine are two of the first six states in the country to enact full public financing of elections, what is called “clean-money” campaign reform. “Clean money” inspires hope. Candidates for state office in the reform states do not have to run for office the way everybody does everywhere else. In order to qualify, they have to raise a fairly large number of small contributions. Once they achieve the number they need, based on the size of their district, they qualify for full public funding. They have to agree to raise no private money and to abide by spending limits. If they are opposed by a candidate who is being funded the traditional way, or if they are being targeted by outside groups spending independently, they can obtain additional matching funds so that they have a level playing field upon which to operate.

In recent elections in Arizona and Maine, fully half of the elected officials from both states ran clean. Three-quarters of the Maine state Senate in 2003–2004 was made up of people who ran clean, and more than half the Maine state House. Nearly half the Arizona House; about one-sixth of the Arizona Senate; the Arizona governor, secretary of state, attorney general, and nearly all the statewide offices in Arizona in 2003–2004 were held by people who ran free of dependence on private money. The opportunity to run a viable campaign without dependence on big donors dramatically opened the process to a more diverse array of candidates. More women are running. More Hispanics and Native Americans are running. There is more competition. There are more contested races. There are more third-party and independent candidates. Both Republicans and Democrats have participated.

The candidates elected with clean money say they feel less beholden to financial interests in office. They are independent, as well, of their own party leadership.

They just don't feel like they owe anybody—except the people who elected them. There is no lobbyist who can put an arm around them and say, “Hey, I hear you have a big campaign debt; let me help retire it for you.”

Passing clean money initiatives in more states is very important to eventually passing them nationally. North Carolina has enacted full public financing of judicial elections, operating on the same idea that we shouldn't have our judges corrupted by the need to raise money. New Mexico has adopted full public financing for its Public Regulation Commission, a statewide body that oversees corporations and utilities, whose officeholders are heavily lobbied by moneyed interests. There are about a half dozen other states close to enacting some version of clean-money reform, though with political scandals involving pay-to-play corruption cropping up continually, there are always new opportunities that can't be predicted. Just think of how Enron and WorldCom suddenly lit a fire under Senator Paul Sarbanes' corporate-reform bill in the summer of 2002. To progress, it is important to be prepared to act quickly when the next big scandal emerges, as it eventually will.

In the 2004 presidential campaign, of course, both the Democratic candidate and the Republican candidate rejected spending limits. This rejection should be used as an organizing vehicle in the future—to oppose the buying of the presidency, generate clean-money campaigns in all states, and follow the example of the United Kingdom, with short campaigns and equal amounts of publicly financed television time for all major presidential candidates.

Voter Democracy

Most Americans believe that voting is a universal right, that we elect based on one person—one vote, that all citizens are equal, that we are governed by the rule of law, that the Supreme Court is not political, and that minority views are protected no matter how abhorrent they are to the majority. But these beliefs currently are myths.

Accordingly, the disenfranchisement of the 2000 election and in elections since must be used to launch a more powerful voter democracy movement.

After the voting debacle in 2000, the federal government made many promises—for example, to replace unreliable voting machines, train poll workers, and upgrade voter registration lists. Congress passed a Help America Vote Act. Over \$800 million was promised for election improvements in 2004. Yet only a small fraction of that sum has been made available. Little progress has been made. Continuing abuses have been well documented.

As the Center for Voting and Democracy (fairvote.org) and others have proposed, the nation needs a federal system with federal standards. After September 11 federal workers began monitoring airport security. We need a comparable system for election security.

The federal government must invest substantial resources in voting technologies that are truly cutting edge and secure, with open source software, voter-verified paper trails, and the public interest incorporated without resistance. Local election administration should be led by qualified and properly trained officials and poll workers who are not participating in political campaigns or other partisan activity. A national voter registration system needs to assure we have clean voter lists. New voters should be automatically registered. Felons who have completed their sentences should be allowed to vote. Federal officials should protect voters, especially the poor and minorities, from intimidation. New federal regulations should reverse the partisan gerrymandering that has made competitive elections to the House of Representatives obsolete. All states and counties should be held to high standards by an entity of the federal government that is immune from political pressure. Nonprofit organizations and the media must upgrade their watchdog roles.

More fundamentally, America must reform its presidential election system.

We need direct presidential election by popular vote. If the electoral college cannot be abolished for now, instant runoff voting and proportional representation are the next best options. Instant runoff voting means that, rather than just vote for a single candidate, voters have the option to rank the candidates in order of preference: first choice, second choice, third choice. If a candidate receives a majority of first choices, he or she wins. But if not, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated—thus failing to advance to the runoff—and a second round of counting occurs. The process continues until there is a winner.

The other option, proportional representation, allocates electoral votes in proportion to the statewide popular vote, not by the present winner-take-all procedure. President Nixon and President Roosevelt both supported proportional representation. It already is used in most presidential primaries and most legislative races in most established democracies worldwide.

Political Alliance

History teaches that lasting reform must build outside of Washington. The American Revolution didn't begin in Philadelphia in 1776 with the signing of the Declaration of Independence but in earlier years of local rebellion. The civil rights movement didn't begin with Martin Luther King Jr.'s 1963 speech at the Lincoln Memorial but in thousands of southern churches. The maverick spirit of the American Revolution and the civil rights movement is still there—in coffee shops, bars, barber shops, working-class churches, and neighborhood block parties. And in conversations with cab drivers, grocery clerks, nurses, janitors, mechanics, restaurant workers, factory workers, and parents upon whom “welfare reform” has been imposed.

The American ruling class will resist campaign finance and voter democracy reform, but step-by-step persistence is needed, persistence that centers on bringing the middle class, working class, and poor together to vote for a Fair Economic Deal and for the policies that polls already show they favor, as documented on these pages. The targets for a new voting alliance should not be just the few who vote but the hundred-million-plus who haven't been voting, at least in congressional elections, because of disillusion with present American democracy, including youthful voters, minority voters, people in aging suburbs, and professionals in the new exurbs.

Focused on elections at the local, state, and federal level, organizing and advocacy for a new alliance needs to be facilitated by organizations and websites like Alternet.org, America Coming Together, Campaign for America's Future, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, CommonDreams.org, the Economic Policy Institute, Electronic Iraq, the Harvard Civil Rights Project, the Media Fund, MediaReform.org, MoveOn.org, The Nation.com, Peace Action.org, People for the American Way, Public Campaign, the Sentencing Project, the Rolling Thunder folks, TomPaine.com, and hundreds of others.

Through such organizing, Americans must be convinced that they have a role to play other than paying taxes. Remembering President Kennedy, we must vote in "the kind of peace that makes life on earth worth living . . . not merely peace for Americans but peace for all men and women, not merely peace in our time but peace for all time."

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