

Democracy in U.S. Security Strategy

From Promotion to Support

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PRINCIPAL AUTHOR

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Democracy promotion in some form has been central to U.S. foreign policy since the country's inception, yet recent setbacks require reevaluating: What role, if any, should democracy have in U.S. security strategy and public diplomacy today? Extensive interviews with former national security advisers, senior diplomats and policymakers, strategic thinkers, and democracy experts, along with in-depth explorations of alternative strategies by Larry Diamond, Francis Fukuyama, and Michael McFaul, all enhanced by an elite, bipartisan advisory committee, have found the following:

The consolidation and spread of democracy remain a strategic U.S. interest. Others may cite values, but members of the strategic community unequivocally maintain that the consolidation and spread of democracy remain a U.S. strategic interest for multiple reasons, including an enduring belief in the “democratic peace theory”; that democracies make better decisions and partners for the United States; and that a role in spreading democracy can help the United States be, and be perceived as, a benevolent global power.

“Democracy” should be rehabilitated, not jettisoned. The new administration should affirm that democracies are not defined by elections, but are slow, complex, and indigenous processes, continuously struggling with self-governance, including the United States itself today.

More than Iraq, Egypt has shaped the U.S. strategic community's views. The principal recent U.S. strategic mistake is viewed as the loss of credibility from the gap between U.S. rhetoric and public action in places like Egypt, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia, not launching a democracy crusade into Iraq, which was initially a quest to eliminate WMD.

Charges of hypocrisy are inevitable. The United States will face charges of hypocrisy not just because it must balance other strategic interests, but also because its strategy should vary with countries' needs and desires; U.S. partners; the amount of U.S. influence; and the manner (e.g. public or private) to influence others most effectively.

Support, do not promote, democracy. Promoting has become synonymous with imposing democracy. U.S. strategy should be patient, humble, cooperative, and pragmatic, and not always active and public. Working side-by-side with other nongovernmental, national, and multilateral actors, the United States should pursue a “democracy support” strategy, invoking these pillars:

- be a model democracy, including in resolving issues like Guantanamo and torture;
- rebuild credibility by pragmatically and explicitly acknowledging that U.S. strategies, tailored for different countries and regions, as well as U.S. interests will vary;
- enhance political assistance to strengthen good governance by shifting from determining what countries need to responding to *their* initiatives, while sustainably scaling it to countries' size;
- use economic assistance to reduce corruption, absolute poverty, and help consolidate nascent indigenous efforts, delivering on the promise of democracy and bringing “freedom from want”;
- engage autocratic regimes—both friendly and adversarial—and their societies, including democratic forces, through diplomatic and other means to facilitate democratic transitions.

1

WHAT NOW FOR U.S. DEMOCRACY PROMOTION?

Alexander T.J. Lennon

Although many others have dedicated their careers to studying or fostering democracy, I have not. I am a security policy analyst and strategist. So why run a project on the role of democracy in U.S. security strategy? While interacting with officials and experts from other countries, I have not only had opportunities to learn about their politics, priorities, and perceptions, but am often asked for my assessments to help explain the United States. As the situation in Iraq deteriorated and particularly after Hamas won 2006 elections in the Palestinian territories, more interlocutors—both abroad and in the United States—began to assert that democracy promotion would inevitably fade from U.S. foreign policy along with the Bush administration. But a closer look at the United States' foreign policy history and its own political identity revealed deeper roots for democracy prior to the Bush administration. What role would it perform in the future?

The spread of democracy has not traditionally been pursued by the United States simply for altruistic reasons or as a blind ideological commitment; it is a strategy that has sought to enhance U.S. interests. Zbigniew Brzezinski, in his most recent book, *Second Chance*, recalled French strategic thinker Raymond Aron's counsel that "the strength of a great power is diminished if it ceases to serve an idea."¹ Without such a supportable idea, countries would not know the ends to which power will be used, balancing against the United States will be inevitable, and U.S. power will inexorably decline. Historically, the United States has pursued democracy promotion as that idea.

Given its place in U.S. foreign policy, but also the setbacks in recent years, the United States is more likely to revisit, and possibly reframe, rather than dismiss the place of democracy promotion in U.S. strategy. To help shape and understand the potential changes in U.S. security strategy, questions remained: Given the experiences of recent years, is democracy promotion sustainable? Should it guide U.S. security strategy, be adjusted, or even be replaced? How, if at all, should it shape the U.S. national security strategy itself and public diplomacy by officials with global responsibilities, including the president?

Democracy in U.S. History

"Democracy promotion is not just another foreign policy instrument or idealist diversion; it is central to U.S. political identity and sense of national purpose," concluded Georgetown Universi-

1. Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Second Chance: Three Presidents and the Crisis of American Superpower* (New York: Basic Books, 2007), p. 180.

ty's Jonathan Monten in his recent historical review.² America's founders were unanimous in their belief that the consent of the governed was the only legitimate basis for political authority and that popular sovereignty was therefore the best form of government. *Novus Ordo Seclorum*, or New Order of the Ages, is written on the back of the Great Seal of the United States, proclaiming the intention of the founders to change the nature of government itself. Thomas Jefferson himself hopefully predicted that the entire Western Hemisphere would eventually be a confederation of democratic republics and that the United States would be the leader in bringing this change about.³

Although the desire to promote democracy in the rest of the world has been a basic principle of U.S. foreign policy throughout its history, strategies to pursue that goal have changed dramatically over time. Initially, serving as an example and promoting commerce were the principal tools. As U.S. cohesion and power have grown over the past 225 years, more active forms of intervention, including military force, have been utilized well before the Bush administration invoked the principle in Iraq.

The first hundred years of American democracy promotion strategy has been characterized as "exemplarism." According to this perspective, the United States promoted democracy most effectively by showing other countries the benefits of democratic governance: that it could serve as a "shining city on a hill" to be emulated by others.⁴ Throughout the nineteenth century, as the United States grew, it expanded the tools it used, seeking to promote democratic republics in the Americas by removing European influences through policies like the Louisiana Purchase and the Monroe Doctrine. Purging the Western Hemisphere of European influence launched the United States into a more active phase of democracy promotion, or what Monten calls "vindicalism."⁵

Early in the twentieth century, World War I marked a new activism in U.S. efforts to promote democracy globally, including on the European continent itself. When laying out his war aims to Congress, President Woodrow Wilson famously declared that the United States must "make the world safe for democracy."⁶ What is often misunderstood about Wilsonian foreign policy, historian and strategist Walter Russell Mead explains in his award-winning book *Special Providence*, is that it is not strictly based on a moral impulse to act altruistically, and thus potentially naively, on behalf of other countries. Because it rests on a premise that democracies are better and more reliable partners than monarchies and tyrannies, Wilsonian foreign policy is a practical imperative based on American interests.⁷

In *America's Mission*, Tufts University professor Tony Smith's study of American democracy promotion in the twentieth century, the author contends that "America has formulated frameworks for world order in which the promotion of democracy plays a conspicuous role. The emphasis on global security, the world market, and international law and organizations figure prominently alongside the call for national, democratic self-determination."⁸ These efforts to remake global

2. Jonathan Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine: Power, Nationalism, and Democracy Promotion in U.S. Strategy," *International Security* 29, no. 4 (Spring 2005): 113. Also, see Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).

3. Michael Lind, *The Next American Nation* (New York: Free Press, 1995): 17–18.

4. Monten, "The Roots of the Bush Doctrine," p. 113.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

6. Woodrow Wilson: *War Message*, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/ww18.htm>.

7. Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 162–166.

8. Smith, *America's Mission*, p. 29.

order and shape the international system itself have also been elements of American democracy promotion strategy.

As part of this tradition, in his 1941 State of the Union address prior to the bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt envisioned that “in the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms”: freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. Making the case for U.S. entry into the war, he concluded that “our support goes to those who struggle to gain those rights or keep them.”⁹

The years following World War II contained many other examples of democracy promotion’s enduring place in U.S. strategy and its successes, leading Smith to characterize the immediate postwar years as “the decisive period of the century, so far as the eventual fate of democracy was concerned.”¹⁰ The FDR administration instituted the Good Neighbor Policy throughout Latin America as a way to promote genuine democracies. Efforts such as direct aid in the form of the Marshall Plan, political reconstruction in both Germany and Japan, and international agreements like NATO and Bretton Woods helped construct many democracies including in all of the former Axis powers west of the iron curtain. Unfortunately, the Cold War undermined the potential for this system of democratic countries to be extended to many areas outside of Western Europe.

The modern era of democracy promotion can be traced to the Reagan administration, which sought to elevate democracy promotion as a central component of public U.S. foreign policy. In his famous Westminster speech before the House of Commons in 1982, Reagan proposed “to foster the infrastructure of democracy—the system of a free press, unions, political parties, universities—which allows a people to choose their own way to develop their own culture, to reconcile their own differences through peaceful means.”¹¹

As part of its Cold War strategy, the Reagan administration certainly made near-term exceptions and backed strongmen when deemed necessary, but it was a significant public change nonetheless. The democratic transitions that followed contributed to what was called a third wave of democratization in the latter part of the twentieth century.¹² By the end of the Cold War, President George H.W. Bush even used force in Panama in 1989, analyst Robert Kagan reminded, “to defend democracy” in a conflict “between Noriega and the people of Panama.”¹³

After the Soviet Union collapsed, the Clinton administration designed its own national security strategy of engagement and enlargement around three interlocking goals: enhancing security, bolstering U.S. economic interests, and promoting democracy abroad. National security adviser Anthony Lake proclaimed “the successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement—enlargement of the world’s free community of market democracies.”¹⁴

9. Franklin Roosevelt’s Annual Address to Congress, “Four Freedoms,” January 6, 1941, <http://www.feri.org/common/news/details.cfm?QID=2089&clientid=11005>.

10. Smith, *America’s Mission*, p. 10.

11. “President Reagan: Speech to the House of Commons,” June 8, 1982, <http://www.fordham.edu/hall-sall/mod/1982reagan1.html>.

12. See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993).

13. Robert Kagan, “America Supports Democracy, How Novel,” *Financial Times*, December 6, 2006.

14. Remarks of Anthony Lake, September 21, 1993, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/lakedoc.html>.

In practice, the Clinton administration supported democracy with what it called “pragmatic idealism,” including using force in “Operation Uphold Democracy” to reinstate President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Haiti. By the time Clinton’s term was done, Walter Russell Mead concluded that “the nineties contributed to important and lasting change [in democracy promotion]. It was, by any reasonable measure, a stunning achievement and a major triumph. Nevertheless, the end of the century saw Wilsonians in a period of retrenchment, reconsideration, and even retreat.” Mead argued that the retreat was due to three factors, familiar throughout past—and even future—American history: an exaggerated perception of the speed with which U.S. efforts could change other countries (this time without a Soviet alternative); a number of unpopular interventions abroad in the name of democracy (particularly in the Balkans this time); and a reluctance to cede U.S. sovereignty to international institutions that proponents sought to build to spread democracy.¹⁵

After he was first elected, George W. Bush’s disavowal of nation building and expressed desire on the campaign trail to make the United States less adventurous abroad were interpreted as signs that democracy promotion could become less important in U.S. foreign policy. Needless to say, the September 11 attacks changed that. Democracy promotion was recast as a central pillar of U.S. strategy to combat terrorism and, after weapons of mass destruction were not found, the principal public justification of the war in Iraq. After winning reelection in 2004, Bush used the pulpit of the Second Inaugural Address to set out what some consider the loftiest declaration of the role of democracy promotion in our nation’s history, declaring “it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.”¹⁶

Initially, momentum seemed to be gaining as a series of pro-democratic revolutions swept across the globe in places like Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, and Ukraine as well as initial elections in Iraq and Afghanistan. Within a short period of time, however, many of these revolutions appeared to retreat: Hamas won Palestinian parliamentary elections; setbacks emerged in Egypt, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan; violence increased in Iraq and Afghanistan; and a coup in Thailand and crackdown in Myanmar erupted.

As these setbacks mounted, opinion leaders—from David Broder to David Brooks, Jackson Diehl, Fred Hiatt, and Fareed Zakaria—all raised questions about what would happen to democracy promotion in the next U.S. administration. Even experts like Carnegie Endowment vice president, and advisory committee member for this project, Tom Carothers concluded that “the future of democracy promotion as part of U.S. foreign policy is uncertain.”¹⁷

Such concerns were not limited to one party, but bipartisan. Carothers relayed that “the U.S. public is now less supportive of democracy promotion than at any time in recent decades, with a sizeable percentage doubting the value to the United States of such efforts and the ability of the United States to have much positive impact in this domain. The doubters are distributed along the ideological spectrum, causing uncertainty and debate within both the Republican and Democratic parties.”¹⁸ Republican candidates disavowed democracy promotion in a presidential debate, with

15. Mead, *Special Providence*, p. 286.

16. “President George W. Bush’s Second Inaugural Address,” January 20, 2005, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4460172>.

17. Thomas Carothers, *U.S. Democracy Promotion during and after Bush* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment, 2007), p. v.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 32.

arguments ranging from “maybe going to elections so quickly is a mistake” to “I don’t think we can force people to accept our way of life, our way of government.”¹⁹

Among Democrats, former Clinton administration official Ron Asmus confessed:

The Democratic Party is divided over whether it should return to the Clinton-era principles of liberal internationalism and reapply them to our increasingly dangerous post-9/11 world, or instead embrace a new, more limited form of cold-eyed realism based on a narrower definition of U.S. interests, a preference for stability and an abiding skepticism about whether pursuing democracy is a luxury we can afford.²⁰

Asmus continued that “democracy promotion was a key issue long before Bush emerged on the national stage, and it will remain one long after he has retired to his Crawford ranch [S]uch an alternative [strategy to expand democracy and human rights] is central to the task of rebuilding the nation’s image and alliances.” The answer, he concluded, “must be to develop a more realistic and credible democracy-promotion strategy, not to abandon the goal.”²¹

How the Future Was Approached

Nevertheless, as Francis Fukuyama and Michael McFaul previously explained, “to argue that the United States has strategic and moral interests in the spread of democracy does not mean that the United States is capable of spreading democracy.”²² Recognizing both the role that democracy had played through U.S. history and the damage that had recently been done to its reputation, this project sought to identify the role for democracy in U.S. security strategy through two phases. First, more than 40 in-depth interviews were conducted with strategic experts from June to November 2008 to produce a white paper (chapter 2) to carefully identify, understand, and assess the security community’s perceptions of democracy promotion as well as its limits on the eve of the new U.S. administration. In other words, this first phase sought to better understand the strategic baseline, or landscape, upon which any new efforts might be built.

Interviews were conducted for 30 to 75 minutes each, initially with a handful of democracy experts to ensure we were asking the right questions, and then focusing on members of the foreign and security policy community—or former senior policymakers, diplomats, policy planning directors, and nongovernmental experts. (This phase did not widely investigate the views of the expert community, nor did it look at broader public opinion in detail.) To both protect the confidentiality and maximize the candor of the interview subjects while giving the reader a general sense of who, or at least how many, might be saying what, coded citations (for example, “former government policymaker A1”) are used throughout the chapter. (When a single source makes a particular claim, it is noted in the text.) Coding enables readers to see how many, and which types of, subjects, based on their experiences, make a particular claim while preserving the individual’s anonymity.

19. Peter Baker, “As Democracy Push Falter, Bush Feels like a ‘Dissident,’” *Washington Post*, August 20, 2007, p. A1.

20. Ronald D. Asmus, “The Democrats’ Democracy Problem,” *Washington Post*, June 17, 2007, p. B3

21. *Ibid.*, p. B3.

22. Francis Fukuyama and Michael McFaul, “Should Democracy Be Promoted or Demoted?” *The Washington Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (Winter 2007–2008): 34.

The interviews were generally guided by a handful of open-ended questions rather than firmly following a set script. Questions frequently asked included:

- Why, if at all, is it in the U.S. interest to have democracy spread overseas?
- Under what circumstances might an active and public U.S. role be effective in spreading democracy? When is it counterproductive?
- Was the Second Inaugural Address a mistake?
- Is “democracy promotion” the right phrase for the new administration to use when talking about this issue, or should either or both words be replaced?
- Based on the post–Cold War lessons of the last two administrations, how should the next administration change its approach?

This open-ended format allowed conversations to flow and focus on the most relevant topics for each person, particularly as many had limited time available.

In the project’s second phase, Larry Diamond, Francis Fukuyama, and Michael McFaul evaluate the political feasibility, strategic rationale, merits, U.S. role, and public diplomacy strategy of three ways democracy promotion may be recast. These alternative strategies are not mutually exclusive, but are respectively elaborated on, as follows: supporting instead of promoting democracy (Diamond, chapter 3); reconceptualizing democracy and empowering it to deliver on the promise of better lives for its citizens (Fukuyama, chapter 4); and/or using engagement rather than isolation to foster democracy (McFaul, chapter 5). Authors were given wide latitude to develop their arguments, but were asked to consider a number of questions, some of which built on the findings of chapter 2:

- What is the strategic rationale for the strategy? Is it distinct from the past two administrations?
- How politically feasible is the strategy domestically?
- How would such a strategy be articulated in U.S. public diplomacy, particularly the national security strategy?
- How might the strategy address the perceived hypocrisy, or rhetoric-reality gap, in U.S. democracy promotion?
- Is it necessary that the United States take an active and public role in pursuing this strategy? If not, who can, should, or must take the lead?
- Under this strategy, what policies would change from the outgoing administration?

Finally, a concluding policy brief (chapter 6) summarizes the project’s overall findings and recommends the place for democracy in U.S. security strategy. To maintain limits on a project of this scope and maximize the expertise of those working on it, this volume does not tackle a number of difficult and essential questions such as how to implement foreign assistance; how to organize the U.S. government to pursue these goals; or how to tailor policies to any particular country or even region. Instead, it principally focuses on developing a potential U.S. national security strategy framework that includes public diplomacy by officials with global responsibilities, within which region- and country-specific approaches might be subsequently designed by others.

The Scope of the Effort

A wide range of people have been willing to share their time and expertise to help improve this effort. First, in addition to members of the advisory committee described below, more than 40 experts in U.S. security strategy and/or democracy agreed to share their views for chapter 2. The full list, which is included as appendix A, ranges from former senior policymakers Brent Scowcroft, Lee Hamilton, Richard Armitage, Jim Steinberg, and Strobe Talbott to former senior diplomats such as undersecretaries of state for political affairs Nicholas Burns, Marc Grossman, and Tom Pickering; former strategic advisers such as policy planning directors Richard Haass and Stephen Krasner as well as counselor to Secretary Condoleezza Rice, Philip Zelikow; nongovernmental strategic analysts such as Carnegie Endowment president Jessica Mathews, Council on Foreign Relations senior fellow Walter Russell Mead, Harvard professor Joseph Nye, and *Newsweek International* editor and CNN host Fareed Zakaria; as well as a handful of non-American strategic analysts such as French strategic thinker François Heisbourg and former Jordanian foreign minister Marwan Muasher. Particularly given the expertise and limited time available for people of this caliber, I am grateful to each and every one of them for their generosity in sharing their time and ideas.

Second, I am deeply indebted to those who so kindly agreed to participate on the advisory committee. The committee, whose members are listed in appendix B, was designed to bring broad foreign policy strategic thinkers together with democracy experts. The members were predominantly from the United States, as were the interviewees, but included a handful of non-Americans to permit a better initial understanding of how ideas and policies were, and might be, perceived abroad. The committee met three times between May and December 2008 to vet key draft products, ranging from 2 to 6 hours for each session. Although conversations with and among the advisory committee members improved the findings, those findings are mine or the chapter author's responsibility alone. Members of the advisory committee are not responsible for, nor do they necessarily agree with, the conclusions drawn here.

I am especially grateful to three advisory committee members, each of whom contributed even greater time and attention to this undertaking by writing a chapter. Larry Diamond, Francis Fukuyama, and Michael McFaul are extraordinarily busy experts with an immense number of responsibilities, particularly, in some cases, during the 2008 year. Yet, each was willing to take on the task of writing a chapter, discussing his draft with the advisory committee, and revising it for inclusion here. What makes these contributions all the more remarkable is not only their substantive quality, but how much of a pleasure it is to work with each author. For that, I am particularly thankful.

Finally, two exceptionally diligent and talented CSIS staff members deserve my special thanks. Vijay Phulwani was instrumental in helping review existing literature on this topic, developing the project and its initial approach. Throughout the project itself, Matt Owens has tirelessly worked to facilitate the advisory committee meetings, set up interviews, transcribe nearly 400 pages of conversations, help me think through their key themes, meticulously organize relevant excerpts of those transcripts, work with the authors and their offices, and do innumerable other essential but not necessarily glamorous tasks, while simultaneously serving as a substantive sounding board to make this project feasible and improve its quality. He has truly earned all the respect I hold for him.

The Road Ahead?

Improved by the generosity and insight of all these people, this initiative seeks to better understand how security strategists perceive the place of democracy promotion in U.S. security strategy and to explore alternatives for how it might be recast by the new administration. Ultimately, it seeks to shape and spark ongoing debate about the role that democracy should serve within the U.S. national security strategy framework. That debate will ultimately help shape the very idea that the United States, as a great power, serves in the world.

2

VIEWS ON DEMOCRACY
PROMOTION FROM THE
STRATEGIC COMMUNITY

Alexander T.J. Lennon

What role, if any, should democracy promotion have in U.S. security strategy today? To answer this question, it helps to understand the existing perceptions and lessons being drawn by the strategic community from the last two U.S. administrations—the first two since the end of the Cold War. Understandably, much public discourse has recently focused on the fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, but what did these years mean for perceptions of U.S. democracy promotion?

To begin to find out, in addition to conversations with and among the advisory committee, more than 40 members of the foreign and security policy community—former senior policymakers national security adviser Brent Scowcroft, chair of the House Armed Services Committee Lee Hamilton, deputy secretaries of state Richard Armitage and Strobe Talbott, and deputy national security adviser (now deputy secretary of state) James Steinberg; diplomats like former undersecretaries of state for political affairs Nicholas Burns, Marc Grossman (both to George W. Bush), and Thomas Pickering (to Bill Clinton); strategic advisers such as former policy planning directors Richard Haass and Stephen Krasner and counselor to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Philip Zelikow; other officials; and nongovernmental strategists and scholars from the United States, such as Carnegie Endowment president Jessica Mathews, Council on Foreign Relations senior fellow Walter Russell Mead, Harvard professor Joseph S. Nye, Jr., and *Newsweek International* editor and CNN host Fareed Zakaria, and from overseas such as French strategist François Heisbourg and former Jordanian Foreign Minister Marwan Muasher—were interviewed (see appendix A for a full list of interviews). The conversations were 30 to 75 minutes each and guided by a handful of open-ended questions, rather than firmly following a set script, allowing them to flow and focus on the most relevant topics for each, particularly since many had limited time available. To both protect the confidentiality and maximize the candor of those interviewed, while still giving the reader a better sense of generally who or at least how many subjects said what, citations are coded, instead of simply citing “interview with author.”¹

The results of those interviews are organized and excerpted in this white paper—or guide addressing problems to help educate readers and make decisions—before turning to explore alternate strategies in subsequent chapters. The purpose here is to report the views of members of the strategic community, not to analyze them—a topic left for the concluding chapter. Conversations did not get into specific strategies for any country or even region, nor did they explore a number of crucial issues such as the structure of the U.S. government or the methods by which

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1. Throughout this chapter, the first citations listed in each reference note are the sources of direct quotations listed in the same order as the statements cited, respectively, with others making the same point listed following the words “as well as.”

assistance might be most effectively delivered. Instead, topics focused on why, if at all, it is in the U.S. strategic interest for democracy to spread today; which lessons have been learned from recent experiences about the role the United States should perform; and which principles and policies the United States should base its strategy on, especially its rhetoric and global public diplomacy framework.

The answers help to understand the perceived problem or shortfalls in democracy promotion today, enabling analysts and government officials to target these concerns in the public diplomacy and policymaking processes. In other words, insights contained in these interviews help to assess the strategic landscape, or baseline, upon which new initiatives might be built. A significant finding of this exercise is that the three democracy strategies presented in subsequent chapters would likely receive broad support from the strategic community.

Is the Spread of Democracy a U.S. Strategic Interest?

Interviews began by asking every subject: “Why, if at all, is the spread of democracy in the U.S. strategic interest today?” Every person, without exception, said yes, but for a variety of reasons. Many simply started with the fundamental role that seeking the spread of democracy has historically played in U.S. foreign policy. “It’s our heritage,” said one former senior diplomat, or “it’s organic to who we are as a nation and as a people,” said another former official.² “As far as I know, every U.S. president except John Quincy Adams . . . and certainly every post–Cold War president” sought the spread of democracy from “George Washington, on the eve of his presidency, where he says that the success of what we’re doing is going to basically influence the future of self-government” and “the Jefferson–Hamilton debates when Washington was president” through Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Bill Clinton.³ Perhaps more cynically, some thought that democracy simply “resonates with the American public” or “for candidates and for politicians it is irresistible, and has been from the early days of the republic.”⁴ More emotively, at least one non-American strategist thought “instinctively that America was always not only about power, but was always also about an idea.”⁵ Grounding it in government practice, a former senior diplomat advised: “I think it’s terribly important that we honor the basic democratic traditions of this country by trying through policy, as much as we can, to see democracy succeed elsewhere.”⁶

Beyond this basic sense of U.S. identity, many subjects cited at least one of three strategic reasons why the spread of democracy is in the U.S. interest. First, many invoked an enduring belief in some version of the “democratic peace theory” that democracies do not fight each other or that

2. Former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008) and former government official A88 (October 2008), respectively, as well as senior policymaker A80 (August 2008). For a detailed discussion of the sense of American identity, see Anne-Marie Slaughter, *The Idea That Is America: Keeping Faith with Our Values in a Dangerous World* (New York: Basic Books, 2008).

3. Former senior policymaker A84 (August 2008), democracy expert A71 (July 2008), former government official A82 (August 2008), democracy expert A73 (July 2008) for Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, former senior strategic adviser A110 (October 2008), and A82 (August 2008), respectively.

4. Former senior strategic adviser A86 (October 2008) and analyst A72 (July 2008).

5. Strategist A107 (October 2008).

6. Former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008).

“if there was genuine democracy around the world, it [the world] would be a more peaceful and prosperous place.”⁷ The basic rationale is “restraint . . . it encourages negotiation and compromise as opposed to domination and conquest” or that, as one former senior policymaker said, “If you have a band of democratically minded countries that accept rule of law, then they will look toward other means to resolve disputes, not undertaking aggressive behavior.”⁸ Nearly every conversation admitted this relationship was not absolute, and respondents believed “not the very strong version, but a moderately strong version” of this relationship “which basically is true” that democracies “less frequently,” “infrequently,” or “nearly” do not fight. In other words, that democracy “might contribute to peace” or that democracy “tended to” restrain countries.⁹

Others also qualified that this relationship worked in the “long run.”¹⁰ The obvious problem, some pointed out, “is the process: you can’t get that from here. It is extremely unclear and uncertain how long [democratization] takes, and it can have a destabilizing impact.” One former senior strategic adviser concurred “a lot depends upon how quickly it spreads, how it spreads, what is the process like—immature democracies can easily get hijacked by nationalism, and so forth.” “As the world’s leading power, we have an overwhelming interest above all in an orderly world,” one former diplomat concluded, “so not democracy for any price: it all depends on the conditions in which it is promoted.”¹¹

A second strategic reason cited is that, generally, democracies are perceived to be better governed, to make better decisions, and thus to be better strategic partners for U.S. interests in the world. The basic version of this argument, according to one former senior administration adviser explaining U.S. views after September 11, is only indirectly about democracy:

There [was] a sense that time had shown that certain models of government had worked better than others, and that in general it was true that more open and representative and pluralistic forms of government, freer forms of government, were more responsive and seemed to be more effective. And so sometimes praise for democracy and democratic institutions would work their way into the boilerplate, but it wasn’t the central theme. The central theme was governance matters: we need to care about the way these countries govern themselves.¹²

A related idea expressed by a handful of former officials is that democracies make better U.S. partners: “By and large, we have better relations with democratic countries. We work better with them; they share our other values and ambition to democracy, individual rights, rule of law, protection of minority rights.”¹³

7. Former senior policymakers A76 (July 2008) as well as A80 (August 2008) and analysts A81 (August 2008), A102 (August 2008), and A103 (August 2008).

8. Analyst A101 (August 2008) and former senior policymaker A90 (October 2008), respectively.

9. Former senior policymakers A105 (August 2008), A84 (August 2008), analyst A72 (July 2008), former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008), analyst A77 (July 2008), and strategist A91 (November 2008), respectively.

10. Strategists A91 (November 2008), A104 (August 2008), and A112 (October 2008).

11. Former government officials A108 (October 2008), former senior strategic adviser A106 (September 2008), and former diplomat A74 (July 2008) as well as former official A88 (October 2008).

12. Former senior strategic adviser A110 (October 2008) as well as former senior diplomat A75 (July 2008) as well as analysts A79 (August 2008) and A104 (August 2008).

13. Former government official A111 (October 2008) as well as former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008), former strategic adviser A87 (October 2008), and analysts A72 (July 2008) and A81 (August 2008).

Some subjects put forward a multilateral version of the partnership argument, contending that “in the longer term, states that make that transition become more reliable and more cooperative participants in a cooperative international system, . . . in an increasingly globalized economy and polity,” a “part of the international fabric that makes the world work well,” are better “for managing global disorder and security,” and “are drawn to participating in the kind of liberal international order the United States tries to create.” One former senior policymaker concluded: “I would simply say a U.S. grand strategy should certainly be aimed at an international system with the United States in a leading role, but is rules-based. And those rules should be derived from the consent of the governed . . . and the only way to do that is to have an international community made up of democratically governed states”¹⁴

Finally, a third strategic reason expressed in interviews is that having the United States seek to spread democracy helps it be, and be perceived as, a benevolent global power or leader. A few simply cited “values,” a “moral” interest in spreading democracy for others, or altruistically that democracy “comes the closest to fulfilling the aspirations of the people who are being governed.”¹⁵ But the principal strategic argument, as one former senior policymaker elaborated, is that “for the United States, our credibility as a world leader depends to some extent on the values that we bring to our world leadership. And being identified as on the side of those people that share those [values] is central to our basic engagement in the international system and who we are as a people.”¹⁶ Another former senior policymaker contended:

I think what the United States wants to try to do in its foreign policy is to convey the fact that we are a benevolent power. And we’re not going to try to impose our views on others. . . . We do want to identify ourselves with the quest for human dignity of other people. I am impressed when I go abroad and talk to audiences—almost anywhere in the world—I end up feeling they want the same things we want. In other words: a decent family life, education, healthcare, jobs, pensions, the ability to marry the person of their choice So I think American policy in part will succeed or fail in our ability to convey the idea that we’re on their side—that we’re on their side in their quest for human dignity, and on their side in their quest for a better life.¹⁷

Similarly, a former senior diplomat argued, “I think the definition of world leadership is that you can’t just be all about us. When you talk as the president, the secretary of state, what you say has to, in some way, incorporate the larger hopes and ambitions of people outside of your country That’s what leadership is.”¹⁸

While the spread of democracy is clearly a U.S. strategic interest, many individuals also clearly stated: “I don’t think democracy promotion ought to be the central feature of a foreign policy strategy. I think it ought to be part of it.” Democracy is not necessarily seen as an end in itself, but as more likely to contribute to various grand strategic visions ranging from “spreading modernity”

14. Former government adviser A83 (August 2008), former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008), former government adviser A88 (October 2008), and strategist A104 (August 2008), and former senior policymaker A76 (July 2008), respectively.

15. Analyst A81 (August 2008), former senior policymaker A105 (August 2008) and analyst A77 (July 2008), and former senior policymaker A93 (November 2008), respectively, as well as strategist A104 (August 2008).

16. Former senior policymaker A105 (August 2008).

17. Former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008).

18. Former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008).

to “building a rule-based international system” to creating “a world with effective, responsible sovereign states . . . that are able to provide core services to their own population and are going to play by the existing international rules of the game.”¹⁹

Along the way, a handful cautioned to “recognize that sometimes we have higher security priorities, higher orders of concern over immediate stability, especially in nuclear states . . . we have to just be much more realistic.” “At the end of the day,” assessed a former senior strategic adviser, “if the word ‘priority’ is going to have any meaning, there have to be priorities. And in most cases I wouldn’t make this a priority. It doesn’t mean you have to take it off the table And it’s also not obvious to me that by making this a priority, we necessarily increase the odds we’ll succeed.”²⁰

These statements reveal at least two concerns that could lead democracy to be a lower strategic priority. For one thing, former officials and analysts are not convinced that publicly making the promotion of democracy a U.S. strategic priority always accelerates transitions to democracy, a point emphasized throughout this paper. Another reason is that democracy may not come fast enough to deal with near-term security threats. One former strategic adviser reiterated: “Particularly when you have terrorism and proliferation simultaneously, the need for stability and security tends to trump longer-term interests in liberalization and democracy.”²¹ Ultimately, abstract efforts to create a hierarchy uniformly prioritizing democracy against other security interests were predictably not fruitful. “I think it’s likely to be case by case . . . [otherwise] that’s too mechanical,” said one. “We have to let our own political leaders make judgments on these issues they shouldn’t be rigid rules,” another echoed.²²

Strategists cited the democratic peace theory, better decisionmaking and cooperation, and the ability to be a benevolent global power as reasons why the spread of democracy is a U.S. strategic interest. “So the issue,” one former policymaker continued, “is how to do it, not whether to do it—how to do it well”; a point reiterated by another former government strategist: “It’s going to be done, the question is: how skillfully will it be done?”²³

What Role Should the United States Perform?

Interviews did not directly ask about the perceptions of the state of global democracy, or how much help democracy might need, but a few did volunteer various concerns. Overall, one former policymaker explained, “I think what’s happened in the last 20 years is [that] I think people . . . thought there was something almost automatic about [the spread of democracy].”²⁴ That may no longer be the case. One non-American strategist contrasted “many Americans had the assumption

19. Strategists A103 (August 2008) and A112 (October 2008), former senior policymaker A76 (July 2008), and former senior strategic adviser A86 (October 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008).

20. Former government official A88 (October 2008) and former senior strategic advisers A106 (September 2008), respectively, as well as A108 (October 2008).

21. Former strategic adviser A87 (October 2008) as well as former senior policymaker A105 (August 2008), former senior diplomats A69 (July 2008) and A85 (October 2008), and former official A88 (October 2008).

22. Strategist A103 (August 2008) and former government adviser A88 (October 2008), respectively, as well as analyst A81 (August 2008).

23. Former official A82 (August 2008) and former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008), respectively.

24. Former official A82 (August 2008) as well as democracy expert A73 (July 2008) and analyst A81 (August 2008).

that there is an inborn desire of human beings for democracy. And we have more of a tendency, a more pessimistic one, about the ambivalence of human nature. And the desire for democracy is a cultural achievement, and not the result of an inborn instinct.”²⁵

The question then becomes: what role should not just any external power, but specifically the U.S. government, perform to influence the spread of democracy? Slightly more specifically, as the question was asked in most interviews: under what circumstances might active and public U.S. government efforts be helpful, and when might they be counterproductive? Some strategists argued that the efficacy of the U.S. government overall was historically quite limited and should be “in a supporting role” or applied at key moments “when the conditions are right within a particular country . . . [or] when democracy is under threat.”²⁶ One historian summarized:

The U.S. government has never been . . . the primary agent of America’s democratization efforts [I]n a sense, the division of labor we’ve often had is that government tries to create a favorable security and economic climate in which the transformation of societies can go on, and American civil society . . . [and business] . . . helps to create the conditions in which other societies have the tools and the human capital to begin to seek democracy.²⁷

Instinctively, analysts also acknowledged that today “you have to be careful about how that rhetoric is perceived around the world, and be able to do it in a way that doesn’t create this image that the United States is an imperial power.”²⁸ “We’ve to some degree become prisoners of the [misleading] East European example,” elaborated another analyst, explaining:

Democratic movements, it seems to me, are also nationalist movements, and nationalist movements are almost always against some foreign power. In Eastern Europe, the foreign power was obviously the Soviet Union [so we could be successful]. It seems to me, a lot of the parts of the world where we’re talking about promoting democracy [today] are places where nationalist sentiment is going to be in opposition to America and its allies.²⁹

Another independently concurred that “U.S. calls for democracy are portrayed by those that oppose them as efforts by the United States to impose its values, its way of life, on others—in some sense, to eradicate their country or their nationalism.” Therefore, another argued that “especially, big powers like the United States, when they as a government are promoting democracy abroad, will always be viewed with a certain amount of suspicion by those countries that need to be democratized.”³⁰

Nevertheless, one former senior diplomat declared: “Whatever people have said, we’re still seen as a major world power. We’re still seen historically as reasonably benign . . . and those are extremely important attributes that we should not abandon lightly.”³¹ To channel those assets, democracy experts themselves concurred that the government “can be a motivator. I don’t want to

25. Strategist A107 (October 2008).

26. Former senior strategic advisers A106 (September 2008)—as well as A93 (November 2008)—and A111 (October 2008) as well as A84 (August 2008), respectively.

27. Strategist A104 (August 2008) as well as former senior strategic adviser A106 (September 2008).

28. Analysts A81 (August 2008) as well as A74 (July 2008).

29. Analyst A77 (July 2008).

30. Analyst A101 and strategists A107 (October 2008), respectively, as well as A108 (October 2008).

31. Former senior diplomats A75 (July 2008) as well as A85 (October 2008) and former policymaker A82 (August 2008).

say even a leader, but we can definitely help make things happen.” Another specialist elaborated that the U.S. government needs to project “that the work ultimately has to come from the people on the ground—that this is not something that the U.S. can do for them—and even as we proclaim that it’s something that we want, we can’t act as if we’re going to make this happen in the short term . . . [I]t can be supported if the U.S. is a helper, and not the main player.” Or, as one former senior strategic adviser counseled, “We should not be talking about transforming other countries, but managing change . . . We can help on the margins to create safe zones for political space, but they have to do it themselves.”³²

Democracy experts explained that, though the most difficult parts of the world get a lot of public attention, “there are a lot of places where the United States can help, but again you can be the catalyst.” That expert elaborated on the word “catalyst”:

We can articulate what the promised land might look like . . . but we’re not responsible for delivering democracy to the world. We’re responsible for giving people a growing opportunity to know what this could mean for them, and we’d like to help them in any way that we’re capable of helping them. That’s very different, and that changes the whole equation even in a place like Afghanistan or Iraq.³³

Interviews particularly focused on the role that U.S. rhetoric, or public diplomacy, can contribute. Here again, as a microcosm of the U.S. role in general, responses were cautiously mixed. On one hand, many warned that it is “very easy to let your rhetoric outpace reality on this issue.” When that happens, lofty rhetoric “not only is not useful, but it ends up being counterproductive because we appear to be hypocritical.”³⁴ President George W. Bush’s Second Inaugural Address is the most obvious example of this problem, although some defended its “aspirational goals” as an inaugural address.³⁵ One strategic analyst even argued that “at the global level, almost all rhetoric is empty and windy and divorced from actual policy and actual places . . . So maybe we ought to try to articulate what we’re doing more concretely in regional and national contexts . . .”³⁶

On the other hand, democracy experts in particular contend that some rhetoric can catalyze, or “provide political space,” for democracy activists in other countries to operate. Conversely, “when it’s not part of the dialogue, people then assume that you don’t care.”³⁷ Ultimately, as former

32. Democracy experts A68 (July 2008), A71 (July 2008), and senior strategic adviser A108 (October 2008), respectively, as well as democracy expert A66 (July 2008), former senior diplomats A69 (July 2008) and A75 (July 2008), former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008), former senior strategic adviser A110 (October 2008), strategists A89 (October 2008) and A104 (August 2008), and analysts A88 (October 2008) and A101 (August 2008).

33. Democracy experts A66 (July 2008) as well as A64 (June 2008).

34. Analyst A81 (August 2008) and former senior policymakers A105 (August 2008), respectively, as well as A80 (August 2008) and A84 (August 2008), democracy experts A65 (June 2008) and A66 (July 2008), analyst A101 (August 2008), former diplomat A74 (July 2008), and former policymaker A83 (August 2008).

35. Critics include former senior diplomats (from different parties) A85 (October 2008), A92 (November 2008), and A111 (October 2008), strategists (from different parties) A89 (October 2008), A93 (November 2008), A103 (August 2008), A106 (September 2008), and A112 (October 2008), and analyst A101 (August 2008). Those defending the aspirational goals of an inaugural address, but criticizing the administration for not following up included democracy experts (from different parties) A68 (July 2008), A78 (July 2008), and A82 (August 2008), former strategic advisers (from different parties) A86 (October 2008) and A87 (October 2008), and analyst A81 (August 2008).

36. Strategic analyst A104 (August 2008).

37. Democracy experts A68 (July 2008) and A65 (June 2008), respectively.

government officials clarified, “I would basically want to recast it, not eliminate it,” and “some degree of rhetorical inspiration and policy direction is necessary, but it has to be gauged.”³⁸

Recent Experiences (or Three Don’ts)

When asked what lessons could be learned for future U.S. policy from the first two post–Cold War administrations, respondents primarily drew on three experiences, predictably from the last few years—Iraq, the Palestinian elections, and Egypt—all of which have hurt perceptions of U.S. democracy promotion and are seen in interviews as examples of what not to do.

On Iraq, many pointed out that, as one senior adviser from the administration at the time contends, “any serious study, even of the evidence available so far, would rebut the inference that Iraq was invaded in order to democratize it.”³⁹ Nevertheless, others realized that “Iraq has become conflated with the promotion of democracy” and appears to many to be “a euphemism for military intervention and regime change.”⁴⁰ The simple, principal lesson being drawn is that “democracy cannot be imposed by force.”⁴¹ A more nuanced version was proposed by one former government official: “I think military force should never be used to impose democracy. I think we should not rule it out to *restore* democracy, which we did in Haiti with a resolution of the Security Council . . . [but] not in a country that’s never been democratic.”⁴²

Even more broadly than military force, some strategic analysts, including former senior officials, had concluded that “coercive democratization is not a very good strategy” or that “punitive approaches . . . may signal some level of outrage . . . but I don’t have any conviction at all that these sanctions make any difference.”⁴³ Instead, one former senior strategic adviser argued: “If you asked me what works, I think we know one thing that works and that’s incentives.” Another analyst concurred: “There is much too much focus on what we can do to push countries to become democracies, rather than what we can do to lure countries into being democracies . . . U.S. government policy is better aimed at things such as the Millennium Challenge Account and other sorts of initiatives that reward people.”⁴⁴ A number of former officials responsible for democracy issues concurred, with one from the Democratic Party even arguing, “I think the Millennium Challenge Corporation . . . should be the centerpiece of our democracy policy. I think we ought to

38. Former senior strategic adviser A106 (September 2008) and analyst A83 (August 2008) as well as democracy expert A65 (June 2008).

39. Former senior strategic adviser A110 (October 2008) as well as democracy expert A68 (July 2008), and analysts A70 (July 2008), A72 (July 2008), and A77 (July 2008).

40. Democracy expert A65 (June 2008) and strategist A89 (October 2008), respectively, as well as strategist A92 (November 2008), democracy expert A63 (June 2008), and analysts A81 (August 2008) and A83 (August 2008).

41. Former strategic adviser A87 (October 2008) as well as democracy expert A64 (June 2008), analysts A70 (July 2008), A83 (August 2008), and A102 (August 2008). Also see Karin von Hippel, *Democracy by Force: U.S. Military Intervention in the post–Cold War World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

42. Former government official A78 (July 2008).

43. Strategist A103 (August 2008) and former senior policymaker A105 (August 2008) as well as former senior diplomats A74 (July 2008) and A75 (July 2008).

44. Former senior strategic adviser A86 (October 2008) and analyst A101 (August 2008), respectively. Both, as well as former senior policymaker A76 (July 2008), and analysts A77 (July 2008), A79 (August 2008), and A104 (August 2008) specifically cited the value of institutional membership such as the EU and NATO as lures.

globalize that so that we really say to countries: you will get more assistance if you're on the path to democracy."⁴⁵

The second dominant experience mentioned is the January 2006 Palestinian elections, which Hamas won, leading many to conclude that "too many people, when they talk about democracy, look at democracy as elections." Most "would agree now that elections are not enough to make democracy, but most people would also agree that you can't have democracy without free elections."⁴⁶ One former official responsible for democracy issues outlined "three baskets" of democracy assistance:

One is what we are most comfortable with: it's what I call representative democracy—it's the free press, it's the right of assembly, the right to form political parties, the right to compete, it's to have a level playing field and then have an honest election, but it's only one component. Another component is building up civil society—that gets at the roots. And the third component is governance. What happens the day after an election? Is there transparency? Is there accountability?⁴⁷

Another former democracy official concluded, "I think we're very good at getting nations to that first election, to what used to be defined as democracy. I think we're not good, to put it nicely, at helping them after the first election. We are not good at the moment at what is termed 'governance work.'"⁴⁸

The principal lesson drawn by strategists was not just to avoid equating democracy with elections, but that elections could be held too early, or some version of what one former senior strategic adviser called "a quantum theory of democracy, which is that you have to get a critical mass of good governance before elections can be meaningful in any way." One former senior policymaker even said that "elections are the final stage, and in some respects, the least significant component of building open, plural, rights regarding, and popularly accountable governments."⁴⁹

The third and final experience crystallized around U.S. policy toward Egypt, particularly in 2005–2006, although Saudi Arabia and Pakistan were also mentioned. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had cancelled a planned trip to Egypt in February 2005 after Ayman Nour, a political opponent of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, was imprisoned. After he was released and rearrested, however, Rice visited Mubarak in Egypt in February 2006, soon after the Palestinian elections, and did not publicly mention Nour. Here, one democracy expert speculated, "I think more than anything, what undermined the Mideast democracy policy was the imprisoning of Ayman Nour . . . and yet we sort of took it with barely a whimper [in 2006]." Others agreed that "if the United States says and does absolutely nothing in the face of what was seen in Egypt, then this

45. Former officials A78 (July 2008) as well as A82 (August 2008) and A90 (October 2008), democracy expert A65 (June 2008), and former senior strategic advisers A108 (October 2008) and A110 (October 2008).

46. Democracy experts A82 (August 2008) and A63 (June 2008), respectively, as well as A64 (June 2008) and A68 (July 2008), former senior policymakers A76 (July 2008) and A80 (August 2008), former senior strategic advisers A108 (October 2008) and A111 (October 2008), and analysts A72 (July 2008), A74 (July 2008) and A101 (August 2008).

47. Former official A82 (August 2008).

48. Former official A68 (July 2008).

49. Former senior strategic adviser A108 (October 2008) and former senior policymaker A105 (August 2008), respectively, as well as strategists A87 (October 2008), A91 (November 2008), and A92 (November 2008).

is hypocrisy.”⁵⁰ Such hypocrisy “appears cynical and undercuts the credibility of the message” and “became so glaring that it really couldn’t be sustained, and it generated enormous backlash.”⁵¹

Lessons Learned (Four Do’s)

Based in part on these experiences in Iraq, the Palestinian elections, and Egypt, respondents also derived four positive lessons, or principles, for what to do differently. The first is based on the idea, one democracy expert and former official explained, “that democracy is a process, that there are no perfect democracies, that states are on a path toward democracy, and nobody ever attained it in its perfect form.” What that means for outsiders, according to former senior diplomats, is that democracy “is a bottom-up effort—you can’t impose it top-down—that it is a long-term effort, it requires patience, and it’s an effort spending a certain amount of resources on the details.” Any sitting U.S. government, said another, has to have an “understanding that the payoff may come decades later.” Other experts concurred that “it has to be done in a gradual way,” and “change is often slow and at times very painful.”⁵² That incrementalism cannot be used to justify stagnation, one expert emphasized, because “status quo forces in the Arab world use the fact that democratization is a gradual process to do nothing. So I always say these two words together: gradual and serious, not just gradual.”⁵³ What is ultimately required in democratizing countries, however, is a fundamental change in “political culture [that] grows up over a period of decades, if not centuries, and it can’t be transplanted.”⁵⁴

Such patience, respondents suggested, may also require a change in *American* political culture. As one non-American strategist contrasted: “We think more in terms of decades than in years, and Americans want results very soon To change a political culture, not only the institutions, is time consuming, and a very complicated historical process.”⁵⁵ To be fair, the Bush administration itself used phrases like “the work of generations” to describe its democracy promotion efforts, although those caveats were often overlooked.⁵⁶ Fundamentally, some former U.S. officials worried that “when you’re in government, you need to show results That tends to steer people into doing things that show impact and change—say, pushing for an election—that may not necessarily be in the best interest of long-term democracy development. Because of the incentive for leaders to show progress, there can be a perverse impact.” Or as another said more simply, “We tend to be

50. Democracy expert A63 (June 2008) and analyst A70 (July 2008), respectively, as well as former senior government policymaker A105 (August 2008), former senior strategic advisers A85 (October 2008) and A108 (October 2008), former government official A68 (July 2008), and analysts A79 (August 2008) and A83 (August 2008).

51. Former government official A83 (August 2008) and strategist A89 (October 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymaker A84 (August 2008), and analysts A79 (August 2008) and A101 (August 2008).

52. Democracy expert and former official A78 (July 2008), former senior diplomats A69 (July 2008) and A85 (October 2008), democracy expert A71 (July 2008), and analyst A101 (August 2008), respectively, as well as former senior diplomat A75 (July 2008).

53. Strategist A92 (November 2008) and democracy expert A71 (July 2008).

54. Former senior policymaker A76 (July 2008) as well as former senior strategic adviser A106 (September 2008).

55. Strategist 107 (October 2008).

56. Democracy experts A63 (June 2008) and A71 (July 2008) and former senior strategic adviser A86 (October 2008).

too impatient to have a consistent effort.”⁵⁷ One former senior diplomat concluded: “I would put it as a longer-term strategic objective. That doesn’t diminish it, but it does . . . [mean that] we need to look into our quiver and select those policy instruments that are best able to play the nurturing, supportive role that plays to the long term [like multiyear assistance funding].”⁵⁸

Second, the United States should approach the issue with more “modesty and humility The extent to which we are prepared to be helpful, supportive, and clear about our values, but not to impose them, is crucial.”⁵⁹ Others reiterated this nuance, distinguishing modesty from humility. What might be called modesty is a general sense that “we can’t do everything in the world just because we’re the strongest country in the world.”⁶⁰ Humility, on the other hand, is a more specific awe of the complexity of democratization—that “the most delicate and difficult thing for any one state to do is to try to dictate the internal arrangements of another state.” Within each society, “a country’s movement toward democracy is driven by many, many different things. And the overarching question isn’t what the [U.S.] government should do, it’s what *can* the government do.”⁶¹ (Emphasis in interview.) Most succinctly, a former senior strategic adviser confessed: “Here’s what I think, I think we have no clue [how to do this]. That’s an honest answer.”⁶² In the end, a former senior diplomat concluded:

What the U.S. government needs to understand is that despite our enormous power, there are limits to what we can do to have an impact on the most deeply seeded forces that shape another country’s political being and society. We can play at the margins, and we may be the most important marginal player in the world—we may have a greater ability than any other government in the world, in some cases, to nudge a country and a society toward democracy—but it’s going to happen because those people decide it’s going to happen in that country.⁶³

In addition to being patient and humble, the third principle is that the United States should act cooperatively. One former senior policymaker explained that cooperation should begin by “recognizing that [democracy] should not be made in America—that this is something that exists in Asian forms, and Latin forms, and African forms. And therefore we should do it as much as we can with others, so it doesn’t look like it’s a kind of Trojan horse of American foreign policy or American cultural values.”⁶⁴

Many echoed this sentiment, citing a wide range of potential partners or other actors, beginning with nongovernmental organizations. A former senior diplomat counseled: “I guess one

57. Former officials A81 (August 2008) and A87 (October 2008), respectively, as well as democracy expert A63 (June 2008).

58. Former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008).

59. Strategist A103 (August 2008).

60. Former senior diplomats A85 (October 2008) as well as A75 (July 2008), strategist A91 (November 2008), democracy expert A64 (June 2008), and analysts A88 (October 2008) and A101 (August 2008).

61. Former senior diplomat A75 (July 2008) and analyst A101 (August 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008), former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008), former senior strategic adviser A86 (October 2008), and analysts A81 (August 2008) and A101 (August 2008). Also see Francis Fukuyama, *America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2007).

62. Former senior strategic advisers A86 (October 2008) as well as A87 (October 2008) and analyst A101 (August 2008).

63. Former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008).

64. Former senior policymaker A105 (August 2008).

of the lessons I learned in government is that it's not just about us. A lot of times, it's American society—our NGOs . . . have an opportunity to be as, or more, influential than our government. Government has a lot of baggage The wider question is what can our society do, not just what can our government do.”⁶⁵ The U.S. government still performs functions that NGOs cannot, such as, in extreme circumstances, “keeping tyrants from conquering countries” or, in a more limited sense, to be “making sure that [NGOs] are allowed to operate.”⁶⁶ But as many argued, “There are very good arguments . . . for NGOs doing this at some distance removed from the United States.”⁶⁷

At the international level, many preferred to put “a greater emphasis on multinational diplomacy and operating within a larger consensus” or even sometimes “having some of our friends take the lead.”⁶⁸ In many cases, European governments were mentioned specifically as “the most natural partner in some places.”⁶⁹ Others pointed to “regional organizations as particularly important, in part because they share some of the cultural history of the region and in part because sometimes it's easier for regional people to talk to each other.”⁷⁰

The fourth principle is that “you have to be much more pragmatic than we are. What I mean by that is that you have to promote democracy at a pace and with the goals that are fitted to the region or the country that you're dealing with.” In other words, “Progress is the word, not to reach the absolute.”⁷¹ In particular, by being more pragmatic, one strategist pointed out, “hypocrisy is less glaring if we do not start with declaring absolutes.”⁷² A number of strategic thinkers argued that the charge of “hypocrisy is inevitable, but we can minimize hypocrisy.”⁷³

Respondents cited at least four different sources for the inevitable charges of hypocrisy. First, “you will always be open to accusations of hypocrisy because there's no ‘one size fits all’ answer.” “Each country presents a unique set of challenges,” one former senior policymaker explained, “and there's nothing wrong with tailoring our approach to the unique set of circumstances that each country presents.”⁷⁴ Second, “democracy promotion is one of your interests—where it stands in the

65. Former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008).

66. Strategist A104 (August 2008) and analyst A81 (August 2008), respectively, as well as former government official A82 (August 2008) and former senior strategic adviser A106 (September 2008).

67. Analyst A101 (August 2008) as well as former senior strategic adviser A111 (October 2008), analyst A70 (July 2008) and democracy experts A65 (June 2008) and A71 (July 2008).

68. Former official A83 (August 2008) and former senior policymaker A84 (August 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymaker A90 (October 2008), former senior diplomat A75 (July 2008), strategists A89 (October 2008) and A92 (November 2008), democracy experts A68 (July 2008), A71 (July 2008), and A73 (July 2008), former officials A78 (July 2008) and A88 (October 2008), and analysts A77 (July 2008) and A102 (August 2008).

69. Former senior strategic adviser A106 (September 2008) as well as strategists A89 (October 2008), A104 (August 2008), and A107 (October 2008), democracy experts A63 (June 2008), A65 (June 2008), and A71 (July 2008), and analysts A70 (July 2008), A83 (August 2008), and A102 (August 2008).

70. Former senior diplomat A75 (July 2008), former senior policymakers A76 (July 2008) and A90 (October 2008), former officials A78 (July 2008), A82 (August 2008), and A83 (August 2008), strategist A92 (November 2008), and analyst A102 (August 2008).

71. Former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008) and strategist A107 (October 2008), respectively, as well as analyst A77 (July 2008).

72. Strategist A112 (October 2008).

73. Former official A88 (October 2008) as well as former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008), former senior strategic adviser A86 (October 2008), former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008), and strategists A89 (October 2008) and A112 (October 2008).

74. Analyst A81 (August 2008) and former senior policymaker A105 (August 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymakers A80 (August 2008) and A90 (October 2008), former senior strategic ad-

hierarchy of interests will just depend” or, as one democracy expert acknowledged, “the primary job of the United States government is not to promote democracy overseas. The primary job of the U.S. government is to keep our country safe, and there may be occasions where one outweighs the other.”⁷⁵ The varying amount of U.S. influence is a third source. “Some regions are more susceptible to external influence than others . . . [In some places] we have more levers,” such as aid.⁷⁶ And, finally, the manner in which U.S. influence can be most effectively wielded varies. “Sometimes, to keep people’s hopes up, you do have to say something publicly. If you think you can get something accomplished by saying it a little less publicly, then I think you should do that. But yes, it’s very difficult because, from the outside, all you can judge by is the press conference.” Ultimately, “the problem with differentiation is the charge of inconsistency and double standards.”⁷⁷

Based on recent, post–Cold War experiences, then, strategists seemed to conclude that the U.S. government could play a useful role in facilitating the spread of democracy if it avoided coercion, holding elections too early, and sought to minimize inevitable charges of hypocrisy while being patient, humble (about both U.S. power generally and the complexity of democracy specifically), cooperative, and pragmatic. So, how do you do that?

What Should the U.S. Government Do?

Although interviews partly focused on a public diplomacy framework, or umbrella, within which region- and country-specific democracy strategies might be pursued, three policy pillars to support such a framework emerged along the way.

Three Pillars for Progress

The fundamental starting point, in the words of one former senior policymaker, is to be “the shining city on a hill . . . [U]nless we set the example, no matter how hard you try, you can’t spread [democracy] The best way is to make it so everyone admires the United States.”⁷⁸ A number of strategists explained, as another former senior policymaker did, “that means there’s a linkage between what’s happening here at home and our democracy abroad. If we are perceived as we were in Guantanamo, and rejecting the Geneva accords, and torturing people, and detentions without due process, that undercuts our ability, sharply, on democracy promotion.” Others also mentioned

visers A86 (October 2008), A87 (October 2008), A106 (September 2008), and A108 (October 2008), former officials A78 (July 2008), A82 (August 2008) and A88 (October 2008), and analysts A72 (July 2008) and A81 (August 2008).

75. Analyst A81 (August 2008) and democracy expert A68 (July 2008), respectively, as well as democracy experts A63 (June 2008), A65 (June 2008), A71 (July 2008) and A73 (July 2008), former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008), and former officials A74 (July 2008), A83 (August 2008), and A88 (August 2008).

76. Former diplomat A74 (July 2008) as well as democracy expert A64 (June 2008), former official A88 (October 2008), and analyst A101 (August 2008).

77. Democracy expert A68 (July 2008) and former senior strategic adviser A106 (September 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymakers A80 (August 2008) and A105 (August 2008), former senior diplomat A69 (July 2008), former senior strategic adviser A111 (October 2008), and democracy expert A73 (July 2008).

78. Former senior policymaker A93 (November 2008) as well as A76 (July 2008) and A80 (August 2008), strategists A103 (August 2008) and A104 (August 2008), and analyst A77 (July 2008).

“disclosing the illegal prison network” and the specter of Abu Ghraib “because we’re showing ourselves to disrespect the rule of law.”⁷⁹

On the bright side, respondents saw the potential for the positive U.S. reputation to “return very quickly [because] there is enormous desire in the world for American leadership on these issues.” The key, explained one analyst, is that “the process of struggle against the evil that exists in our own society, and our own political system, is inspiring to people because there’s still a sense of solidarity in a common struggle . . . and you see people on Guantanamo Bay fighting for that.”⁸⁰

The second pillar is to use economics to help democracy grow. To paraphrase an overused slogan: politics is about economics, stupid. Two strands of this argument were raised. The first is a continuing belief in a version of the traditional argument that “building the infrastructure of plural, open societies is a necessary precursor to successful, political democracy.” “It’s very difficult to have democracy flower without the existence of a large middle class,” respondents argued, in part because “the rule of law [is] the transmission belt between political success and economic success.” One former senior strategic adviser even contends that “the single most important thing we can do for the countries we’re concerned about is to have them move to a free market economy so they attract foreign direct investment . . . Democracy in some ways is shorthand for transparency, accountability, [and] noncorruption among the leadership.”⁸¹

Many cautioned that the relationship “falls in the Keynesian long term” or that economic development is merely “an enabling condition . . . for the stabilization of democratic processes.”⁸² One strategist even contended that “there is a time lag, but the basic correlation is almost mathematical [in the long term], and the massive statistical breadth is stunning. . . but it is a complex, historical process.”⁸³ Others raised open questions about “two cases that really matter—one’s Russia and the other’s China.”⁸⁴ Although many were uncertain about how these two would turn out, a significant number believed that “it’s still highly likely that China is going to have to liberalize its politics to sustain its economic growth,” even if, as one strategist emphasized, “that period is a lot longer than people think.”⁸⁵

The second strain of this argument raised “this whole notion of making democracy deliver . . . and how to make political institutions in these societies work better on quality of life issues.” One

79. Former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008), strategist A91 (November 2008), and former senior diplomat A69 (July 2008), respectively, as well as democracy expert A66 (July 2008) and strategist A89 (October 2008).

80. Former official A78 (July 2008) and analyst A77 (July 2008), respectively.

81. Former senior policymaker A105 (August 2008), strategist A91 (November 2008), former senior diplomat A69 (July 2008), and former senior strategic adviser A108 (October 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymakers A76 (July 2008) and A84 (August 2008), democracy expert A68 (July 2008), strategists A92 (November 2008) and A112 (October 2008), and analyst A101 (August 2008).

82. Analyst A79 (August 2008) and strategist A107 (October 2008), respectively, as well as former senior strategic adviser A111 (October 2008), strategist A104 (August 2008), and analyst A102 (August 2008).

83. Strategist A112 (October 2008).

84. Former senior policymaker A84 (August 2008) as well as former strategic advisers A87 (October 2008) and A106 (September 2008), and analysts A70 (July 2008), A79 (August 2008), A81 (August 2008), and A88 (October 2008). Also see Robert Kagan, *The Return of History and the End of Dreams* (New York: Knopf, 2008).

85. Analyst A101 (August 2008) and A89 (October 2008) as well as former senior policymaker A93 (November 2008), former senior strategic advisers A86 (October 2008) and A108 (October 2008), and strategist A112 (October 2008).

strategist confided that “it is not politically correct to say, but I can guarantee you that the aspirations of extremely poor people is development—a place where kids do not die, where medicine is available.” A former official responsible for democracy issues concurred: “When I’m pushing governance with my staff, I always say . . . [if] they can’t see the kids, and they don’t have a job, there are potholes in the streets, and the electricity doesn’t go on, democracy doesn’t look so hot anymore.”⁸⁶ This led a number of interlocutors to prioritize “that consolidation is the most important thing, and helping countries that are on the path of democracy stay on the path of democracy should be the bulk of our democracy effort.”⁸⁷

The third pillar helps guide U.S. rhetoric, or public diplomacy: “We have to be much more honest that there will always be a real tension between our interests and our desire to see democracy spread.” The problem, another strategist explained, is that “if you overstress democracy promotion, then when you can’t follow through because you find a trade-off with other objectives, you’re going to be accused of hypocrisy, and you’re going to be in worse condition than if you were more modest in your original proclamations.” To minimize charges of hypocrisy, a former senior strategic adviser recommended: “I think you admit, from the get-go, that you’re going to do it differently everywhere You don’t claim consistency.” Another former official elaborated: “I think one can moderate [charges of inconsistency] by setting out positions that are more sophisticated to start with, and which allow for greater variation A more nuanced explanation and approach can be crafted which acknowledge that one can go at many different speeds toward this objective in many different societies.”⁸⁸

A “Democracy Support” Framework

These three pillars—be a better model, use economics, and acknowledge U.S. strategy will vary—can be brought together under a rhetorical umbrella, or a public diplomacy framework, within which region- and country-specific strategies can be designed and implemented. Many counseled to “put less emphasis on rhetoric,” draw on “Teddy Roosevelt and one of his core themes [to] speak softly,” and “do it better . . . with a lot less fanfare and a lot more realism.” “How you do these things is as important as whether you do them,” explained one former senior policymaker, and a democracy expert conceded: “We have entered a phase where democracy promotion has to be, if not redefined, recalibrated.” One former senior strategic adviser lamented that the “democracy promotion” framework specifically “just evokes instant caricatures now. Whatever value that coinage once had has now become so badly debased that I think it’s almost unusable.” Given the controversy surrounding the topic in recent years, “the specificity of words is really important,”

86. Democracy expert A65 (June 2008), strategist A112 (October 2008), and former democracy official A68 (July 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymakers A76 (July 2008) and A93 (November 2008), former senior strategic adviser A108 (September 2008), democracy expert A63 (June 2008), and analysts A77 (July 2008) and A102 (August 2008).

87. Democracy expert A78 (July 2008) as well as former senior diplomat A75 (July 2008), former strategic advisers A87 (October 2008) and A108 (October 2008), strategist A103 (August 2008), and analysts A88 (October 2008) and A102 (August 2008).

88. Strategists A89 (October 2008) and A103 (August 2008), former senior strategic adviser A106, (September 2008), and former official A83 (August 2008), respectively, as well as former senior diplomat A69 (July 2008), former senior strategic advisers A106 (September 2008) and A111 (October 2008), strategist A107 (October 2008), former official A82 (August 2008), democracy expert A71 (July 2008), and analysts A77 (July 2008) and A101 (August 2008).

one expert advised, and a significant part of each interview discussed whether “democracy promotion” is the right phrase for the U.S. government to use.⁸⁹

Perhaps surprisingly, a significant number of those interviewed, including one former senior policymaker, argued: “I don’t think democracy has a bad name, and there’s plenty of polling evidence to suggest it . . . but I think America’s approach to it has a bad name.” Subject experts agreed that “it’s not democracy’s fault, it’s the way we promote it,” or even that “it’s a foolish notion that we should be ashamed of democracy.”⁹⁰ Concerns were certainly raised about the word “democracy,” however, such as “that it leads people to focus on electoral machinery” and led some respondents to search for a wide variety of alternatives.⁹¹

One strategist proposed “responsible governance” and another “good governance,” but subject experts in particular did not “support this running away from the term [democracy to] governance or rule of law,” adding incredulously that democracy “has a certain standing now in the world. People are fighting for this all over, and giving their all, and we’re going to start talking about ‘we mean good governance,’ not democracy?”⁹² Another strategist wondered if “maybe development is a word that in the third world and poor countries may resonate more than democracy,” while experts again resisted, arguing that “people go into the streets in the name of democracy . . . people don’t demand democratic development. People demand democracy.”⁹³

Others individually suggested “something like open, responsible regimes,” “pluralism,” “democratic capacity building,” or “representative government is probably the best one that I’ve found.”⁹⁴ Former senior strategic adviser Philip Zelikow coauthored a recent article proposing “an open, civilized world” as an alternative.⁹⁵ But each of these was only suggested by one person in interviews. Even democratization, “cannot[ing] a process rather than a point in time,” was discouraged because it is a “kind of jargon and bureaucratese, and it implies imposition rather than free choice,” or it “sounds like we’re pulling a whole bunch of switches.”⁹⁶

89. Former senior strategic adviser A106 (September 2008), former diplomat A74 (July 2008), former senior policymakers A76 (July 2008) and A80 (August 2008), former senior strategic adviser A110 (October 2008), and democracy experts A65 (June 2008) and A64 (June 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymaker A84 (August 2008), former senior diplomat A75 (July 2008), former strategic advisers A87 (October 2008) and A108 (October 2008), strategists A89 (October 2008) and A104 (August 2008), and former official A88 (October 2008).

90. Former senior policymakers A105 (August 2008) and democracy experts A66 (July 2008) and A78 (July 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008), former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008), and strategist A107 (October 2008).

91. Former senior policymakers A105 (August 2008) as well as A76 (July 2008) and analyst A72 (July 2008).

92. Strategist A91 (November 2008) and former policymaker A74 (July 2008) suggested responsible and good governance, respectively, while democracy experts A71 (July 2008) as well as A65 (June 2008) and A68 (July 2008) opposed the suggestion.

93. Strategist A104 (August 2008) as well as A112 (October 2008) suggested the term while democracy experts A65 (June 2008) and A82 (August 2008) rejected the idea.

94. Former senior strategic adviser A86 (October 2008), former diplomats A69 (July 2008) and A74 (July 2008), and former strategic adviser A111 (October 2008), respectively.

95. Ernest R. May and Philip D. Zelikow, “An Open, Civilized World,” *The American Interest* 4, no.1 (September/October 2008): 16–31.

96. Suggested by former senior strategic adviser A108 (October 2008) and rejected by former senior diplomats A75 (July 2008) and A74 (July 2008), respectively, as well as democracy expert A73 (July 2008).

Others, instead of looking for terms to replace democracy, preferred to “talk about the component parts” or “almost the building blocks of it . . . the ingredients, if you will.”⁹⁷ Two particularly generated discussion. “Freedom” was suggested by a couple of analysts, particularly drawing on FDR’s four freedoms speech. One suggested that it “allows you to do many more things [like] economic development, basic human rights, rule of law. It gives you a much wider canvas [than democracy]”⁹⁸ Another expert similarly advocated emphasizing human rights, particularly in difficult cases like with the Chinese who “have not signed anything [about democracy]; they have signed the Universal Declaration [of Human Rights].”⁹⁹ A small handful advocated that “the fundamental thing is the rule of law” instead of democracy.¹⁰⁰ Other analysts, however, believed “that rule of law itself is insufficient . . . it’s just not enough” compared with emphasizing democracy. One analyst succinctly said, particularly for high political officials to “start talking about liberal democratic values and rules of law, everybody who doesn’t have a Ph.D. begins to nod off, and even then people with a Ph.D. tend to nod off.”¹⁰¹

Although interviews widely experimented with different words to use, no consensus was reached. The plurality of subjects, however, seemed to come back to democracy, although, one summarized, “everything turns on what you mean by democracy.” When pressed, many general strategists confessed: “I don’t think that there is consensus” now on exactly what democracy means, at least in part because “there’s probably been a move to some extent away from an election-centered definition.”¹⁰² Two strategists separately clarified that “the narrow group—the 500 [or so] in the democracy priesthood—have a very sound, clear sense of what democracy is. But the much broader [strategic] community tends much too often to perceive it as elections, and would have a very hard time listing what are the key elements of democracy.”¹⁰³

Such complexity, however, provides the next administration with an opportunity, many argued, to “unpack democracy, which is such a loaded word” and “to employ a greater degree of nuance in talking about [democracy] as reflected in different situations. In some cases, [putting] emphasis on rule of law, on other sort of building blocks of democracy—greater individual freedom of expression, of movement, of religion.”¹⁰⁴ A handful of others also suggested integrating “justice.”¹⁰⁵ One strategist advocated “diversity,” explaining that “if you make the world safe not just for democracy, but for democracy and diversity, it means that other countries feel they’re going to

97. Former senior strategic advisers A111 (October 2008) and A106 (September 2008) as well as former official A88 (October 2008), while democracy expert A73 (July 2008) opposed the suggestion.

98. Former senior strategic advisers A86 (October 2008) as well as A87 (October 2008) and democracy experts A66 (July 2008) and A68 (July 2008).

99. Democracy expert A78 (July 2008).

100. Former senior diplomats A69 (July 2008) as well as A74 (July 2008), former senior policymaker A105 (August 2008), former strategic adviser A87 (October 2008), strategist A92 (November 2008), democracy expert A66 (July 2008), and former official A82 (August 2008).

101. Analysts A70 (July 2008) and A101 (August 2008), respectively.

102. Analyst A101 (August 2008) and former senior strategic advisers A108 (October 2008) and A106 (September 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymaker A93 (November 2008), former senior diplomats A75 (July 2008) and A85 (October 2008), and strategist A92 (November 2008).

103. Strategist A89 (October 2008) as well as former senior policymaker A84 (August 2008).

104. Former officials A88 (October 2008) and A83 (August 2008), respectively, as well as A82 (August 2008), former senior diplomat A75 (July 2008), strategist A104 (August 2008), democracy expert A73 (July 2008), and analyst A79 (August 2008).

105. Former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008), democracy expert A66 (July 2008), and analyst A77 (July 2008). For a similar argument, see George Perkovich, “Giving Justice Its Due,” *Foreign Affairs*

have the chance to develop their own forms of democracy, and not have an American conception rammed down their throat.”¹⁰⁶

Overall, then, members of the strategic community generally argued that a new administration could continue to talk about democracy, but “redefine what it means” and “make clear . . . that it’s more than just having elections.”¹⁰⁷ While integrating nuances such as FDR’s four freedoms, the rule of law, justice, and possibly diversity, such a clarification should emphasize:

- that democracy is “more of a process than an actual event [like an election]” or that “it’s a journey that doesn’t end;”¹⁰⁸
- humbly that “democracy has to be a constant struggle to improve itself, it has to be a constant struggle to readjust,” and specifically “we’re still perfecting our [own] democracy” to acknowledge Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, and torture;¹⁰⁹ and
- “it has to convey the notion that we know how difficult and complex it is We can talk about [democracy] in a way where we’re not going to make it happen . . . it has to come from within,” and put the United States “on the side of helping people toward their own aspirations, rather than imposing ours on them” with “a long-term, steady emphasis, not . . . expect[ing] to yield some sort of a near-term change [T]he more you put that sort of complete wrapper around it, the more both effective and accepted we will be.”¹¹⁰

Unlike the complex and nuanced discussion on democracy, interviews revealed a much simpler and more consistent view of whether to continue to use “promotion” in U.S. public diplomacy. “I think promotion is the wrong word,” one strategist succinctly concluded. Reasons ranged from promotion “sounds like we’re imposing it on others . . . it has that kind of connotation that is both inaccurate and counterproductive” to it “has a proselytizing sound to it.”¹¹¹ A couple of issue experts did prefer to retain the term because “it’s out there and people know what it stands for” and “promoting implies a kind of agency in some ways.”¹¹² A large number of interlocutors, however, thought promotion “is so strongly associated with marketing and advertising” or “a Madison Avenue ad person’s word.”¹¹³ One former senior policymaker bluntly concluded: “It can be, to use a synonym for stupid, counterproductive, because countries do not like to be exhorted.”¹¹⁴

(July/August 2005), <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20050701faessay84406/george-perkovich/giving-justice-its-due.html>.

106. Strategist A103 (August 2008).

107. Former senior strategic adviser A86 (October 2008) and analyst A101 (August 2008), respectively.

108. Analyst A81 (August 2008) and former senior policymaker A84 (August 2008), respectively.

109. Former senior diplomats A75 (July 2008) and A69 (July 2008), respectively, as well as non-American strategist A91 (November 2008), democracy expert A71 (July 2008), former official A88 (October 2008), and analyst A72 (July 2008).

110. Expert A71 (July 2008) and former strategic adviser A111 (October 2008), respectively.

111. Strategist A91 (November 2008), former official A78 (July 2008), and analyst A72 (July 2008), respectively, as well as former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008), former senior diplomat A75 (July 2008), strategist A112 (October 2008), former official A88 (October 2008), democracy expert A65 (June 2008), and analyst A101 (August 2008).

112. Democracy expert A71 (July 2008) and analysts A70 (July 2008) as well as A81 (August 2008).

113. Former senior strategic adviser A110 (October 2008) and former senior policymakers A84 (August 2008) as well as A105 (August 2008) and A93 (November 2008), strategist A103 (August 2008), and democracy experts A63 (June 2008), A64 (June 2008), and A73 (July 2008).

114. Former senior policymaker A76 (July 2008).

Instead, a majority suggested or agreed with “support.”¹¹⁵ A couple of respondents preferred “nurture.”¹¹⁶ A couple others worried that “support” had “a sort of covert sense to it” or that it “half plays into the [dangerous] idea that there’s always a democracy there waiting to be uncovered.”¹¹⁷ But “support,” the bulk of respondents argued, “gives you a little less of a PR feel,” “is less intrusive,” and “conveys the sense that we’re just here to help you continue to do something that you decided to do, we’re supporting you. It’s probably a better word.”¹¹⁸

The Foundation for a Framework of Democracy Support

Taken together, “democracy support” provides a framework within which region- and country-specific strategies could be devised. According to the views of the strategic community surveyed here, it is in the U.S. strategic interest for democracy to spread because democracies are generally perceived not to fight with one another and typically make better alliance partners as well as decisions. It is also in the U.S. interest to be seen as a benevolent world power, helping others to build their own systems of democratic governance.

Members of the strategic community have drawn a number of lessons from recent setbacks. Iraq, even while initially about weapons of mass destruction, led strategists to conclude that coercion is not as effective as attraction to facilitate democracy. Hamas’s electoral victory is seen not just as a reminder that democracy is about more than elections, but that elections can be held too early. Finally, flourishing U.S. rhetoric such as Bush’s Second Inaugural Address might at times be inspirational, but can also provoke charges of hypocrisy and a loss of credibility if it is too lofty and concomitant actions are not easy to see.

Given these lessons and the long, complex, and ultimately indigenous nature of democratic transitions, U.S. strategy should be patient, humble, cooperative, and pragmatic. To begin to put these principles into practice, strategic community members advised that the United States first and foremost needed to be a better model democracy for others to emulate, addressing the damage that Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, and torture have done to the U.S. reputation. It should also use economic assistance—side-by-side with other transnational, national, and multinational actors—to help build democratic institutions, develop democracies, and deliver on the promise of “freedom from want,” as FDR first articulated almost 70 years ago. In addition, the United States should pragmatically acknowledge that its strategies would adjust not just to its own varying interests around the world, but to diverse needs of countries as well as different amounts of U.S. influence and assorted ways to most effectively leverage that influence. Tailoring U.S. democracy

115. Former senior policymakers A80 (August 2008), A105 (August 2008), A90 (October 2008), and A93 (November 2008), former senior diplomats A74 (July 2008) and A85 (October 2008), former senior strategic advisers A86 (October 2008), A87 (October 2008) and A106 (September 2008), strategists A89 (October 2008), A103 (August 2008), A104 (August 2008), and A112 (October 2008), non-American strategists A91 (November 2008), A92 (November 2008), and A107 (October 2008), democracy experts A63 (June 2008) and A71 (July 2008), and analysts A77 (July 2008), A79 (August 2008), A81 (August 2008), A83 (August 2008), and A101 (August 2008).

116. Former senior policymaker A84 (August 2008) and former democracy official A82 (August 2008).

117. Analysts A72 (July 2008) and A77 (July 2008), respectively.

118. Former senior policymaker A80 (August 2008), analyst A101 (August 2008), and former senior diplomat A85 (October 2008), respectively.

support strategies would, unfortunately, inevitably make the United States vulnerable to charges of hypocrisy, but such variation was ultimately not just inevitable for the United States, but best for each country itself, pursuing its own form of democracy.

These three pillars of U.S. strategy could best be brought together under the umbrella of “democracy support.” Even with recent setbacks, strategists concluded, the problem was not with democracy itself, but with the way that the United States was recently perceived to promote it. A new administration has an opportunity to clarify that democracy is not defined by an election, but is a continuous struggle of indigenous self-governance that no country could claim it had perfectly completed, certainly including the United States itself. “Promotion,” however, had become a toxic term, conveying arrogance and imposition. Instead, members advised, “democracy support” could today better convey patience, humility, cooperation, and pragmatism to foster democracy.

The chapters that follow, then, respectively explore in greater depth whether and how the United States might incorporate support, elements of delivering on the promise of democracy, and engagement in its strategy.

3

SUPPORTING DEMOCRACY REFASHIONING U.S. GLOBAL STRATEGY

Larry Diamond

The current moment is a natural and compelling juncture at which to reevaluate U.S. grand strategy in general and the role of democracy promotion within it. To begin with the obvious, there is a new and in many ways dramatically different government in the United States. Rhetorically at least, President George W. Bush made the promotion of democracy the leading rationale of his foreign policy, particularly during the last five to six years of his administration. No American president—not even Woodrow Wilson—bet so much of his global game on the advance of freedom. And Bush tried to do it, and indeed took daring risks to do it, in the most intractable of places: the Arab Middle East. Now he has left the presidency with his “freedom agenda” largely in ruins, abandoned by his own administration in the face of Islamist gains and freely defied by Arab autocrats. Moreover, Bush’s arrogant and moralistic tone, his use of force in Iraq without broad international support, his need to then justify the invasion through the mission of democracy promotion, and his administration’s general tendency toward unilateral means all alienated potential partners in the cause of advancing global freedom. “Around town” (as they say in Washington) one feels a diffuse sense of starting over with respect to any kind of democracy agenda in American foreign policy, with no clear consensus on how important it should be, what means should be used, or how much it can achieve.

Second, there is the new fact of a global economic crisis of potentially catastrophic scope, depth, and duration. In thinking about grand strategy, this has to be considered a potential game changer. We cannot rule out the possibility that what is now a recession could turn into a global depression. And even if it is “just” a recession, it will be the most severe in decades. Economic crisis stresses regimes of all kinds, and the last global depression coincided with a retrenchment of democracy so sweeping that Samuel Huntington identified it as the “first reverse wave” of democratic breakdowns.

Third, there is growing evidence that we are already in a global *democratic* recession. In fact, the number of democracies in the world and the percentage of states that are democracies had already pretty much leveled off by the mid-1990s, after 20 years of remarkable growth. Since then, we have been at a kind of equilibrium point of roughly 117 to 120 democracies, about three in every five states. However, for many years after 1995, levels of civil and political freedom (as measured annually by Freedom House) continued to expand in the world. In the subsequent decade (1996–2005), the number of countries improving their freedom score exceeded (usually by a large margin, often two or three to one) the number of countries declining in freedom in every year

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but one (see figure 3.1 at the end of this chapter). However, the last two years (2006–2008) were the first three consecutive years since the end of the Cold War in which the number of countries declining in freedom exceeded the number gaining. Nearly four times as many countries declined as improved in freedom in 2007, and in 2008 the ratio was almost as bad.¹ Beyond this is the growing incidence of democratic reversal in the world. Of the 25 breakdowns of democracy since 1974, two-thirds have come just in the past decade. Moreover, many of these reversals of democracy have come in big and strategically important states, like Russia, Nigeria, Venezuela, Thailand, Kenya, and the Philippines.²

The rising trend of democratic reversals and the underlying causes of them bear important implications for U.S. grand strategy. First, the decline and reversal of democracy is never a good thing for the U.S. national interest. It is not only that democracy abroad is generally in the American interest (because, for example, well-established democracies do not fight one another, and liberal democracies are more responsible players on a host of critical issues, from fighting terrorism to preventing humanitarian crisis to securing the rule of law). The United States has an abiding national interest in seeing democracy work in the critical troubled states that have been backsliding, for two big reasons. First, in some of these states, the demise of democracy has brought to or entrenched in power rulers, like Vladimir Putin and Hugo Chavez, who are hostile to important U.S. strategic interests. And second, the reversals or chronic poor performance of democracy in places like Nigeria, Kenya, Thailand, the Philippines, Bangladesh, and Pakistan reflect and also accelerate a more diffuse decline in political stability and state capacity. There is no man or woman on a white horse who is going to save any of these troubled states. The only answer to their predicaments is better—more effective, more accountable, more transparent, more responsive—governance, and this requires stabilizing and deepening democracy, not abandoning it.

Other major emerging democracies may be doing better, but they still confront serious and in some cases growing problems. Mexico is under siege from the drug cartels, with the rule of law and the very authority of the state under serious challenge. Brazil also still struggles with serious problems of lawlessness in urban slums and rural fiefdoms. South Africa is going through a wrenching leadership transition in the midst of rising corruption and endemic crime. Indonesia struggles with Islamic militancy and a debilitating legacy of corruption and human rights abuses by the security forces. And these countries still have substantial levels of poverty that must be reduced if democracy is to be consolidated.

Where democracy is less liberal it is much more at risk, for two reasons. First, where the quality of democracy is lower, the country has less far to slide incrementally until it is no longer a democracy at all. In part this is because weak institutions are more easily subverted, a point that Daniel Ortega has demonstrated with impressive speed upon his return to the presidency in Nicaragua. Second, as the 1999 coup in Pakistan so graphically demonstrated, lower-quality democracies are at greater risk of military or executive coup, because their disenchanted publics are more likely to lose faith in democracy, or at least to abandon support for the specific constitutional sys-

1. See the annual Freedom House surveys of “Freedom in the World” at <http://www.freedomhouse.org>.

2. For much more extensive analysis of this negative trend than space can accommodate here, see Larry Diamond, *The Spirit of Democracy: The Struggle to Build Free Societies throughout the World* (New York: Times Books, 2008), and “The Democratic Rollback: The Resurgence of the Predatory State,” *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 2008).

tem, and thus to become open to or supportive of authoritarian alternatives.³ Illiberal democracy is thus a more difficult form to sustain, and outside of Europe, most democracies are illiberal and can be considered at risk (see table 3.1 at the end of this chapter). Of course, the longer they have been in existence (with time to consolidate institutions like the courts and the party system) and the closer they are to the threshold of liberal democracy, the less danger they are in (with India as an example).⁴

There are two other sobering aspects to this global environment for democracy. One is that in a number of countries—such as Georgia, Guatemala, Burundi, and even Senegal (which is often considered relatively liberal for Africa)—democracy is of such low quality or the electoral playing field is so heavily tilted that it is hard to know whether the system can be called a democracy. By a more rigorous standard of electoral democracy, perhaps 10 to 15 countries labeled as democracies in table 3.1 would have to be shifted to the column of “competitive authoritarianism.”⁵ And second, autocracies are becoming more adept at defending themselves against the use of pluralistic means and spaces to mobilize for democracy and more assertive about aiding other autocracies for this end and subverting neighboring democracies as well.⁶

What this adds up to is an increasingly stressful and challenging time for democracy in the world. The news is not all bad. Authoritarian regimes also figure to be sorely stressed by the economic crisis, particularly where their populations have come to have high expectations of economic growth or where they lack sufficient sources of state income (for example, from oil) to buy off popular frustration. But the existing democracies and near-democracies face a period of growing strain. As the financial crisis works its way through the global system like poison in the bloodstream, this political recession could mutate into a “third reverse wave” of democratic breakdowns.

Strategic Implications

There are few higher imperatives for U.S. grand strategy in the Obama administration than to prevent a reverse wave of democratic implosions. Or to put it more positively, a major purpose of American foreign policy—and with respect to democracy in the world, *the* leading purpose—should be to help deepen, improve, and consolidate democracy where it has already come into being, at least in form. This does not mean that we should abandon the goal of trying to extend democracy as well, and thus to aid struggling democrats in authoritarian situations. But we need to recognize that we are at serious and growing risk of a worldwide paradigm shift, in which the

3. A number of regional barometers of public opinion in new democracies have been uncovering this link, showing that support for democracy is actually more closely related to political performance on certain dimensions of democratic quality than to short-run economic performance. See, for example, the essays in Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, *How People View Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

4. As I do in *The Spirit of Democracy*, I take here as a rough empirical indicator of liberal democracy a score of 1 or 2 on each of the two Freedom House scales of political rights and civil liberties, where 1 means most free or democratic and 7 means most repressive.

5. See the forthcoming book by Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming 2009).

6. Carl Gershman and Michael Allen, “The Assault on Democracy Assistance,” *Journal of Democracy* 17 (April 2006): 36–51; National Endowment for Democracy (NED), *The Backlash against Democracy Assistance*, A Report prepared by the NED for Senator Richard G. Lugar, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, June 8, 2006.

momentum and global luster or legitimacy of democracy could be sharply reversed, with many democracies dying quietly, or with a thud. If this happens, it will not be a favorable climate for the spread of democracy to new places. Rather, those authoritarian regimes that do fail may be succeeded by new dictatorships, possibly even worse (or more aggressive). Neither does it mean that we should stop trying to generate incentives for existing autocracies to move toward democracy. Indeed, one of the most promising tools to leverage the consolidation of existing democracies (selectivity in aid) could also generate a felicitous byproduct in that regard. It is a question of priorities. We are sailing into a storm, and we need to secure the gains for freedom in the world. This must be a project of the established democracies collectively, but with its continuing resources and the moral authority of a new and globally admired president, the United States has more potential than any other single country to help direct the winds of change toward democratic deepening rather than decay.

There is another sense in which aiding the improvement and consolidation of existing democracies seems the right emphasis for the time. After eight years of George W. Bush, other states (and even most of the world's other democracies, including our principal allies) clearly wish to see a more multilateral style and a less hectoring and bombastic tone to U.S. foreign policy. In a period when we need the cooperation of major authoritarian states like China, Russia, and Saudi Arabia to deal with the big international challenges—the economic crisis, the climate change crisis, nuclear proliferation and terrorism—a shift in emphasis from what has appeared in recent years to be an American campaign for “regime change” to a more soft-spoken and incremental effort to support those democracies already in place may serve other American interests better as well.

As I explain in greater detail below, the new strategic emphasis must involve both greater political assistance for state and non-state actors trying to make democracy work in the troubled democracies of the world and greater use of aid selectivity to generate incentives for political leaders to reduce corruption, poverty, and human rights abuses and improve the quality of governance. These two strategies would be targeted at the emerging democracies and near-democracies or embattled democracies in low or lower-middle income countries. This includes the larger and more strategic countries—Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Indonesia, Ukraine, South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya—as well as a host of smaller emerging democracies: more than 20 in Africa, most of Central America, a few in South America (like Peru, Bolivia, and Paraguay), and the post-Communist states of Georgia and Moldova. Some other troubled democracies like Thailand and Mexico are too rich to qualify for conventional development assistance, but could still benefit from political, technical, and diplomatic assistance to address their most serious challenges and perhaps some carefully selected assistance to the most promising civil society organizations working to reform and institutionalize democracy. A key element of the strategy proposed here is not to take democracy for granted in countries like Thailand and Mexico just because they are middle income, or in South Africa just because it is so much richer than its neighbors. Another principle must be to reward and encourage countries when they take important democratic steps forward, as Ghana recently did by becoming the first African country to peacefully transfer power to the opposition for the second consecutive time after the end of a presidency.

In an era where overall aid levels will remain flat (at best) until the economic crisis passes, more aid for emerging and struggling democracies will inevitably mean somewhat less for others. Within the realm of political assistance (which should be increased somewhat as an overall proportion of aid), this will mean spending less of the U.S. Agency for International Development's

democracy and governance budget for Africa in nondemocratic contexts such as Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, countries that are very unlikely to become democracies any time soon. It will mean gradually redirecting some of the heavy political assistance spending in Iraq toward a broader set of democratic opportunities. And it means that most of the \$75 million special appropriation that the Bush administration obtained to foment democratic change in Iran will be better spent trying to consolidate democratic change in existing but tenuous democracies.

Let me be clear: I am *not* proposing that we refrain from protesting human rights violations in autocracies large and small or from supporting democrats who seek to change them. We owe it to our own values, our moral obligations, and our longer-term interests to do so. But I do propose a shift in focus and tone. In one sense, the shift may seem largely theatrical and redundant, because, as noted at the beginning of this chapter, the Bush administration has long since abandoned the hard edge of its “freedom agenda” as it has confronted the tough realities of failure, resistance, radicalism, and conflicting strategic priorities. But there is still value to bringing our declared goals into line with our means and our real interests.

The new approach, then, would be to move from a logic (and declared policy) of “promoting democracy”—with the implication in the minds of many that we are forcing it onto countries, or even selling our own model of it—to a logic of “supporting democracy.” The driving wedge of this new logic would be the stress on supporting the development, reform, and deepening of existing democratic institutions, and supporting the indigenous organizations, networks, parties, and leaders that are trying to make them work. But the new emphasis would be consistent with supporting, through cooperative efforts, the strengthening of representative and rule-of-law institutions even in countries that are not yet over the threshold of electoral democracy. And it would not be inconsistent with efforts to support indigenous democratic forces and even “islands of pluralism or accountability” within authoritarian states.

At its core, the strategy of “supporting democracy” implies a somewhat more modest, realistic, and incremental approach, with more emphasis on working through partnerships, both with other established democracies that offer democracy and governance assistance and with indigenous actors on the ground in these countries. In some respects, this would move the U.S. strategy for advancing global democracy toward the European approach, which is more “developmental” than “political,” favoring aid that pursues “incremental, long-term change” with more emphasis on “governance and the building of a well-functioning state” and more concern to integrate political aspects of development with socioeconomic ones, like poverty reduction.⁷ Although the distinction in approaches could be carried too far and the American effort should not lose its political focus on promoting democracy as an end in itself, some gravitation toward the European style could be felicitous if it facilitates greater U.S.-European cooperative efforts to strengthen emerging democracies.

Partnership also implies an important operational change in programming, with indigenous democratic actors—that is, the candidate recipients of support—defining their own initiatives and priorities to which we respond, rather than our determining *a priori* what they need and then issuing a “request for proposals” or an “indefinite quantity contract.” This approach suggests, as I will elaborate, a strategy with the following six programmatic elements, which revise our current approach (as it has evolved through the last four administrations) for supporting democracy abroad:

7. Thomas Carothers, “Democracy Assistance: Political vs. Developmental?” *Journal of Democracy* 20 (January 2009): 5.

1. Continue and increase assistance to support the strengthening of democratic institutions with better strategic assessment of priorities, greater utilization of nongovernmental instruments (like the National Endowment for Democracy, or NED), and a longer-term approach to assist civil society organizations;
2. focus more on supporting local efforts to generate transparency and control corruption, which both democratic activists and mass publics around the world identify as one of the greatest deficiencies in their democracies;
3. expand the use of the logic of the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) to reward good performers with more aid (thereby generating incentives for countries to govern more democratically) and to encourage and support democratic consultation within countries on how development assistance should be utilized;
4. identify and support effective policies to reduce absolute poverty;
5. use more multilateral mechanisms and cooperation among democracies to support democratic development around the world;
6. remain resolute, but less strident, in our global effort to support democratic dissidents and movements in authoritarian regimes.

Programmatic Pillars of a National Strategy to Support Democracy Abroad

The proposed new national strategy is an adjustment of what we have been doing, not a radical departure. It depends heavily on sustaining, enhancing, and improving the myriad of efforts we have been funding for more than two decades to assist the development of the institutions of democracy in the state, party, and electoral politics and in civil society. It would bring new energy and more hard-headed thinking to the rising tide of efforts to counter corruption. It would reform foreign aid much more comprehensively, both to generate incentives for better governance and to achieve more dramatic reductions in poverty. It would pursue a more multilateral, less imperious and moralistic approach to advancing democracy. Yet it would continue to stand up for human rights and to try to find ways to open up political space in repressive countries. Let us now examine these six pillars in greater detail.

Democracy Assistance

Democracies are troubled and in danger for three principal reasons: their political and civic institutions are very weak and underdeveloped; to one degree or another, they are captured and subverted by corrupt elite networks; and as a result, what ordinary citizens too often experience in their daily lives is poverty, stagnation, exploitation, injustice, and physical insecurity rather than order, developmental progress, and a rule of law. To support democracy abroad, we must assist it to work and govern better. Democracy and governance aid thus lies at the core of a foreign policy to support democracy, and it needs to be substantially increased. The key programs here are the “democracy and governance” (DG) assistance programs of the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID, and the grants and direct programs of the NED, its four core institutes, and other nongovernmental actors, such as Freedom House and the Open Society Institute.

The basic purposes and lines of work will remain the same, though as explained in the next section, much more needs to be done to assist societies and governments to fight corruption. The formal institutions of democracy—judicial systems, parliaments, elected local governments and assemblies, electoral management bodies, various agencies of horizontal accountability, and ministries and administrative agencies of the state—need assistance to function more professionally, fairly, efficiently, and transparently, with greater capacity to respond to citizen needs and fulfill their democratic responsibilities. Political assistance can also help build executive and legislative capacities for democratic control of the military, police, and intelligence agencies. In a struggling democracy, particularly in a poor country, most (or all) institutions of democratic governance will have dramatic needs for resources, skills, and physical infrastructure. In the state sector, the costs of this assistance can become significant, so donors need to set priorities with a careful strategic assessment. But the most important dimension of that assessment is determining whether there is the political will to use the assistance to achieve better and more democratic governance. In the absence of such will, we get, for example, better equipped, trained, and housed courts that are no less corrupt and politically pliant.

On the nongovernmental side, the civil societies of new democracies have similar needs for resources, skills, and knowledge. Nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs, in lower- and lower-middle-income countries have little scope to raise funding locally for their operations unless they turn to their own government, which can fatally compromise their independence. There is thus a huge need for international support for civil society groups building democracy through such means as civic education, human rights advocacy, election monitoring, women's empowerment, policy analysis, parliamentary monitoring, and advocacy of good governance reforms. Independent trade unions, independent business chambers, bar associations, and NGOs working on such issues as the environment, community development, consumer protection, and the rights of women, youth, and minorities also need support. Effective support requires extensive engagement with the society to ensure that programs and grants “grow out of the needs and requests of democrats in the country.”⁸ This implies as well the need for intimate knowledge of the local context and frequent review and evaluation of grant recipients. For, once large amounts of money become available, charlatans move in for the kill, and even well-intentioned actors can become too comfortable or fall victim to the temptations toward corruption that prevail in the society at large. In addition, the sector can be easily penetrated and subverted by front organizations for business, military, or state actors opposed to democratic reforms.

Although civil society assistance has been criticized for focusing on urban elites, imposing priorities, and distorting the organizational landscape, it is hard to imagine how troubled democracies can improve without stronger civil societies. Only a vigorous civil society can expose governance and human rights abuses and mobilize domestic constituencies for reform. Supporting civil society effectively must thus be a major element of any strategy to support democracy.

One of the sectors of civil society where more investment is clearly required is the support of independent media. Although U.S. donors (governmental and private) spent an estimated \$142 million in 2006 on international media assistance, huge needs remain: for example, to improve the reporting and writing skills and the professional standards of journalists; to build up and modernize journalism training programs; to support campaigns for regulatory reform to ensure the

8. Lorne Craner and Kenneth Wollack, *New Directions for Democracy Promotion*, Better World Campaign, International Republican Institute, and National Democratic Institute, 2008, p. 12.

freedom and safety of the mass media and access to information; to enhance business skills and practices; and to accelerate the incorporation of new digital technologies, including cell phone text messaging and Internet blogging.⁹ Support should also be increased for think tanks that research issues of democracy and development and that advocate for reforms—of judicial systems, banking systems, parliament, electoral systems, campaign finance, and corporate structures—to make emerging democracies more inclusive, transparent, efficient, lawful, fair, and economically productive.¹⁰

In between society and government stands the deeply troubled sphere of political parties. This is one of the toughest arenas to work in, because it is so overtly political. But experience shows that assistance through nongovernmental actors like the two U.S. party institutes, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI), can help political parties abroad to gradually become more open, transparent, responsive, and democratic. Principally, they do so by offering training and advice on how to develop and utilize membership bases, volunteer networks, campaign organizations, local branches, fundraising, public opinion polling, issue research, policy platforms, media messages, constituency relations, and democratic methods of choosing their leaders and candidates. Some of this comes during election campaigns, but much of it is ongoing organization building, helping parties to govern and legislate, to recruit and campaign, and to involve women and youth.¹¹

If democracy assistance is to take the lead in a new strategy of democracy support, we must do more of it, and do it better.¹² No sweeping structural transformation of what we do seems right for this sector. We need a mix of actors and approaches. We need country-tailored strategies. We need a long-term approach. But some institutional and operational changes are called for to complement increased funding for democracy and governance assistance (which now stands at about \$1.5 billion).

First, we need more capacity to do this work, especially in USAID. Over the last few decades, USAID has suffered a drastic shrinkage of its career staff in every sector. As a result, it has become dependent on a host of for-profit corporations and nonprofit groups to implement its programs. A comprehensive review of this arrangement is long overdue. There is an emerging consensus among development professionals and even national security experts that USAID needs an approximate doubling of its professional staff. In addition, the entire U.S. governmental role in international development needs to be elevated, streamlined, and made more coherent. As the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network has recently proposed, this will require a comprehensive redrafting of the Foreign Assistance Act to rationalize the bewildering array of directives, objectives, and earmarks and to consolidate more of the U.S. government's international development assistance into a more capable, authoritative, and independent development agency, whether that is “an empowered and modernized USAID” or a new cabinet-level department.¹³ NED—which occupies a distinctive and vital niche in this realm because it is the principal nongovernmental instrument

9. Center for International Media Assistance, National Endowment for Democracy (NED), *Empowering Independent Media: U.S. Efforts to Foster Free and Independent News around the World* (Washington, D.C.: NED, 2008).

10. For examples, see the members of the Network of Democracy Research Institutes, <http://www.wmd.org/ndri/ndri.html>.

11. Thomas Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link: Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006).

12. This section draws from and somewhat adapts pages 316 through 321 of my book, *The Spirit of Democracy*.

13. “Building a Better Future through Smarter Development Assistance,” Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network (a memo to the Obama administration transition, transmitted on November 10, 2008), http://www.modernizingforeignassistance.net/documents/MFAN_Transition%20Strategy_111008c.pdf.

for assistance—would also have to hire more staff to manage increased congressional funding for its grants and programs.

Second, in crafting strategies and priorities for assisting democracies, we need more emphasis on consultation with local stakeholders to ensure that what we are seeking to do and fund responds to the most urgent needs for democratic strengthening—and has a decent chance of success. Local involvement and ownership is necessary not only for grants but for identifying the obstacles to and priorities for democratic development. Such a bottom-up assessment can yield surprising and valuable insights. For example, based on Western experience, rule-of-law assistance programs instinctively tend to invest in courts. “Yet it is by no means clear that courts are the essence of a rule of law system in a country,” writes Thomas Carothers, as “courts play a role late in the process.”¹⁴ A bottom-up assessment may point to the need for other aspects of “rule of law” reform, including support for alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, traditional justice practices, civic education and empowerment, legal aid clinics, police training and monitoring, and human rights organizations, if anything significant and lasting is to be achieved.¹⁵

Third, as I have stressed, effective aid to state institutions depends on the political will to use it *for* democracy. Aid to state agencies is a tricky business—and an expensive one, especially when it involves construction of buildings, purchases of equipment, and payroll for staff. It does little good to train and equip judges, legislators, and counter-corruption agents if they are not structurally independent of the executive branch officials they are supposed to monitor and check. Before donor organizations spend millions of dollars, they have to analyze whether institutions have the independence, leadership, and will to advance democracy. In theory, this is part of what USAID’s strategic assessments of the political context aim to achieve.

Fourth, we need to take a patient and long-term approach that operates from realistic expectations of what grants and assistance programs can achieve. It is not practical to expect individual democracy aid projects to transform levels of freedom and the quality of governance. But they can help to ensure that elections are better monitored and more transparent, that citizens know their rights and participate actively, that political parties become responsive to public concerns, and that legislative committees question and investigate executive branch actions more competently. Pressure to produce “showy” near-term results tends to generate simplistic formulas for counting people trained or extravagant claims that overlook subtle but real achievements.

14. Thomas Carothers, “Promoting the Rule of Law Abroad: The Problem of Knowledge,” in Thomas Carothers, *Critical Mission: Essays on Democracy Promotion* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2004), pp. 136–137. This “narrow preoccupation with judicial reform” as rule of law reform is a central theme in the case studies and findings of Carothers, ed., *Promoting the Rule of Law Abroad: In Search of Knowledge* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006), quoted from p. 330.

15. In the late 1990s, the Democracy and Governance Office of USAID developed a comprehensive framework for “strategic assessment” of the democracy and governance assistance priorities in a given country. An important phase of that process is to identify the key actors in the state, the political system, and civil society as well as their interests, resources, and alignments. Once a USAID assessment team identifies key advocates of democracy in politics, civil society, and (if they are there) the state, it is not clear how much they are actually consulted in the preparation of the country strategy. Probably this varies across USAID country missions, and over time, and any case country strategies must be approved by the U.S. embassy in the country, the central USAID office, and the State Department. Center for Democracy and Governance, USAID, *Conducting a DG Assessment: A Framework for Strategy Development* (Washington, D.C.: USAID, November 2000), http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/pdfs/pnach305.pdf.

Patience is also required in another sense. Donor organizations and their officers are frequently under “pressure to spend money quickly.”¹⁶ This often leads to waste: splashy conferences, cushy tours for senior officials, and big grants to just a few organizations that may not be in a position to deliver results. But it takes time to survey the scene and consult to determine how funds can be spent effectively. For example, political party assistance programs need to move beyond their short-term focus on elections and campaigns, and even the traditional “fraternal” assistance to like-minded parties, and do more to address the challenge of building and reforming party organizations.¹⁷

Fifth is the issue of scale. Democracy assistance programs at the level of \$5 million, \$10 million, or \$20 million annually may have a discernible impact in a small country, but they are a drop in the bucket for countries the size of Pakistan, Nigeria, or Indonesia. In large countries, democratic organizations and norms must be built up in numerous provinces and hundreds of localities well beyond the capital. Virtually no political assistance organization today is prepared to deliver on that kind of scale, even where, as in Indonesia, the political climate may be favorable. This is one reason why sizeable increases are needed in overall levels of funding.

Yet, a massive burst of spending will not be enough unless it can be sustained over the long term. Often that means building institutions, crafting technologies, and developing practices that are scaled to a country’s level of economic development. A simpler, lower-tech approach—for example, in the administration of elections—makes better sense if it is one that a country can operate and sustain on its own for years to come.

Scaling projects for local sustainability does not mean, however, that donors are let off the hook on committing to longer engagements. For some years now, the aid industry, and particularly USAID, has been obsessed with the imperative of “graduation”—seeing aid recipients develop as quickly as possible to a point where they no longer need development assistance. The underlying concern is justifiable; no country should be lulled into an expectation of indefinite dependency. Once a country reaches middle-income status, it can rely for its economic development on internal revenue generation and private capital markets. But even where there is much wealth in the economy, there may not be the resources or the tradition of philanthropy to support civic organizations pressing for democratic change. Further, organizations may need external assistance to do risky things, like defend human rights, raise citizen awareness, build effective parties, and investigate and control corruption. A democracy support strategy must be prepared to offer training and exchange programs and to make outright grants to organizations even in countries that would otherwise be too developed (or too far past a democratic transition) to qualify for aid by existing standards.

Particularly in poor countries, there is a parallel problem with respect to individual civil society organizations. Some critics suggest that NGOs tend to be too dependent on Western aid and too detached from their own societies.¹⁸ But the fact that an NGO cannot raise its core funding in a poor country is hardly a reflection on its value to democracy or even its legitimacy in society. After all, where is such an organization supposed to get the funds to pay a professional staff,

16. Laure-Hélène Piron, “Time to Learn, Time to Act in Africa,” in Carothers, ed., *Promoting the Rule of Law Abroad*, p. 275.

17. Carothers, *Confronting the Weakest Link*, p. 215.

18. See for example Marina Ottaway and Theresa Chung, “Debating Democracy Assistance: Toward a New Paradigm,” *Journal of Democracy* 10, no. 4 (October 1999): 99–113.

rent an office, purchase computers and cell phones, hire students to do research and polling, and deploy community organizers, if not from the international community? It cannot raise money from the very state it is seeking to scrutinize, or from a business community that may be politically captured or cautious, without becoming less effective as an agent of accountability and reform. A democracy support strategy should provide long-term core organizational funding for the best civil society organizations that have amply demonstrated their effectiveness and integrity. This would enable these organizations to plan for the long term and to develop bottom-up program agendas without having to spend inordinate time scrambling and accounting for individual grants. Ideally, such long-term support would be coordinated with other democracy donors to affirm the organizations' image of autonomy.

A New Emphasis on Fighting Corruption

Where democracy is weak, poorly functioning, and devalued by its people, corruption is invariably an important reason why. In a poorly governed country, the problem exists at all levels, from the policeman or petty bureaucrat who extracts a petty bribe to the minister who steals 10 or 20 percent from every contract. Democracy, with the power it gives the people to throw incumbents out of office and the freedom it provides to scrutinize and protest, can be a potent instrument of accountability. But unless democratic institutions are reformed and strengthened, political corruption may get the better of democracy rather than the other way around.

Generically, there is broad understanding of the types of institutions and rules necessary to control corruption, though each society must fit them to its own circumstances. Most of all, reform requires, as explained below, strong government institutions of accountability and oversight. Reforms are also needed to reduce the scope of state ownership and control of the economy, the points at which public officers can use their discretionary authority to collect rents (though this will for a time fly in the face of an ideological reaction that is swinging back in favor of state regulation, in the wake of the financial collapse). Here, it helps a lot to have strong, modern business chambers and economic policy think tanks as well as print media with economic policy focus or expertise, all of which can help to delineate and press an agenda for economic reform. In many countries, much of the business sector is increasingly fed up with corruption and ready to join in a campaign against it. They must be engaged and supported to do so, and to improve their own corporate governance as well.¹⁹ Also needed are anticorruption organizations, governance think tanks, and effective mass media that can analyze the flaws in formal accountability systems, advocate for legal and institutional reforms, and monitor the conduct of government—from drafting the budget to implementing government projects and watching how government officials individually perform their roles and live their lives.

Every democracy support program in an individual country should, in consultation with local actors in the state and especially civil society who are serious about addressing the issue, ask these questions in crafting strategy and program priorities: What is the extent of corruption in govern-

19. The new Web site <http://www.fighting.corruption.org> presents ways that business communities can take collective action to fight corruption. Hosted by the World Bank Institute, it is the fruit of cooperation among the World Bank, Transparency International, the UN Global Compact, the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), and other organizations. CIPE, one of the four core institutes of NED, has also worked extensively to improve corporate governance as another way of reducing the scope for rent-seeking political favouritism. See its Web site, http://www.cipe.org/programs/corp_gov/index.php.

ment and political life and what seem to be its primary loci and forms? What (if anything) is being done to control it, and what are the holes in the system? And what can democracy and governance assistance do to help those in government and civil society who want to control corruption and promote integrity and transparency in public life?

Ultimately, the strategy must establish strong, independent institutions of “horizontal accountability”: a counter-corruption commission of some kind, a system of government auditing (with a supreme audit agency), and perhaps an ombudsman as well. These agencies must exist in some form, and they must have statutory autonomy from the political officials (the president or prime minister, the ruling party, the cabinet, even the parliament) they are to monitor. They need the legal authority to receive declarations of assets, monitor their veracity, investigate government conduct, and refer or prosecute charges. They must be vigorously led by energetic, competent individuals not beholden to political masters. They must have adequate professional staff with legal and accounting training, job tenure, and insulation from political pressure. And they must have sufficient funding to accomplish their mission. Parliamentary oversight committees, economic regulatory bodies, freedom of information laws, and of course an effective, independent judicial system are important parts of a broader architecture.

These days, most emerging democracies have these institutions on paper, but too often they are a hollow shell. They are not meant to function seriously, and they do not. At times, a strategy of democracy support must join with local actors outside of government to pressure for serious reform. In many of these countries, we have real leverage with respect to aid (see below) and other geopolitical benefits, and we need to exercise it on behalf of structural reforms to control corruption. Where we lack sufficient leverage with the government directly, we can at least support those forces in civil society seeking real reform. And where we find anticorruption institutions with serious leadership and potential, we need to rally behind them with the technical and financial assistance to improve their capacity and elevate their status.

This is not just another item on the checklist of democratic governance. Often, it drives to the heart of how political systems function and how democracy malfunctions. It is the single most important and pervasive reason why states are weak and why they fail: because officials serve the private interests of their families, parties, and cronies, not the public interests of state building and national development. We cannot be serious about supporting democratic development in tough places unless we support those actors in civil society and the state who are serious about controlling corruption.

Reforming and Restructuring Foreign Assistance

The most straightforward element of a democracy support strategy would seem to be this: emerging democracies need to “deliver the goods” in terms of economic growth and social welfare if they are to become established, broadly legitimate, and secure. Low-income and economically stressed democracies need help to do this. Of course, we should want to foster development and relieve poverty everywhere, but why not make a particular commitment to the emerging democracies in need?

The logic is naturally appealing, but it can fall victim to the same pitfalls that have bedeviled foreign aid in general. Aid that is offered to states without regard to the quality of leadership and the conditions of governance is too often wasted. After more than four decades and hundreds of billions of dollars of assistance to Africa, conditions of life in many African countries are actually worse than they were at independence. Unless states put in place institutions to ensure that public

resources are actually spent for public developmental purposes—to improve education, health care, productivity, and infrastructure—aid is unlikely to generate sustainable development.

Democracy—in the minimal sense of regular, free, and fair elections—is a good start, but it is not enough. Real accountability also requires vigorous institutions of horizontal accountability, as discussed above, and a free and pluralistic civil society. Even a very poor state can resolve to allow freedom of expression and organization; these mainly require states to refrain from doing bad things. And even a very poor state can put in place the formal architecture of horizontal accountability and a rule of law, although it may require significant external assistance to help train and fund these institutions. More than anything else, it is a question of political leadership and political will.

The instinct to simply aid struggling democracies (or poor countries in general), then, must be complemented with a smart approach that seeks to generate the incentives for elected leaders (and those seeking office) to govern responsibly and to put in place and empower the kinds of institutions that can restrain corruption and facilitate effective spending for development. This is essentially the logic of the Millennium Challenge Account, which assesses country eligibility for substantial new flows of assistance on the basis of three criteria: ruling justly (by providing freedom and a rule of law and by controlling corruption); investing in people (especially basic health and education); and promoting economic freedom. Seventeen publicly available indicators, drawn from independent agencies such as Freedom House, the World Bank, and the World Health Organization, are used to measure the criteria.²⁰ The result is a reasonably arms-length process of assessing candidate countries on their merits.²¹

Space does not permit me to assess in detail here the structure and performance of the MCA. For our purposes here, the following points will suffice.

First, although some have criticized the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) for being too slow and bureaucratic in disbursing funds, the fundamental logic of the MCA—“selectivity” in granting new streams of assistance in order to generate incentives for better governance—is a hugely important and promising innovation. The MCA should be retained in a new strategy of democracy support, and the broader allocation of development assistance should take MCA principles into account more, by rewarding good performers with more aid.

Second, the motivating logic of the MCA, for improved governance, could be sharpened by weighting the political criteria more heavily than the other two; by giving still more weight to the “control of corruption” measure (which now counts as just one of six features of “ruling justly”); and, crucially, by making an independent assessment of whether countries have in place the requisite laws and institutions to fight corruption. A problematic feature of the MCA is that it grades on a curve; if virtually every low-income country is corrupt, then we just take as “eligible” the half that are less corrupt. But again, there is no reason why even a poor country cannot put in place the laws and institutions to wage a serious campaign against corruption. The MCA should require that

20. For a list and description of the indicators and a discussion of the selection process, see <http://www.mcc.gov/selection/indicators/>.

21. This is the conclusion of Steven Radelet, “The Millennium Challenge Account in Africa: Promises vs. Progress,” Testimony Before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, June 28, 2007, p. 3, <http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/110/rad062807.htm>. Some other assessments suggest that political judgments may enter in near the end in the final decisions, but only on the margins of countries that qualify or nearly so.

such institutions be in place before a compact is signed, and countries that have already qualified for MCA but are judged to be deficient in this regard should be required to make reforms in order to continue to receive such aid. We do not need to dictate the specific form of these institutions, though we can make available advisers and models from a range of other countries. Just as MCA-recipient countries are required to hold broad deliberative consultations to shape a “compact” on how to spend the aid, so they should be required to consult broadly on how to shape and empower institutions of corruption control if they are deficient. Our message should be, “Build it, and we will come”—that is, put in place serious institutions of accountability, give them independent and vigorous leadership, and we will provide the funding and technical assistance to help them operate effectively (over and above the substantive MCA compact aid). For countries seeking to qualify, assistance to reform and strengthen these accountability institutions (and other features of democracy and a rule of law) should be part of the “threshold” program.

Third, while the MCA need not formally require electoral democracy, it should exclude countries that do not allow substantial press and associational freedom and judicial independence. To be sure, these goals can be undermined by powerful non-state actors as well, but the MCC could at least judge whether the state is putting significant barriers in the way of them. The desire for MCA eligibility (and for increased development assistance more broadly) could then become a motivation for states to remove these barriers.

Fourth, the MCC needs to monitor and press more vigorously for ongoing compliance with the MCA standards, even after countries formally qualify for assistance. Some of the countries now in the process of implementing MCA aid compacts,²² such as Armenia, Georgia, and Nicaragua, have sharply declined in democracy and governance since they qualified. The MCA is now monitoring compliance in these countries. It needs to show the nerve to suspend or terminate assistance unless assaults on the principles of good governance cease.

Finally, to work as intended, the MCA will ultimately need more funding. When created in 2004, it was intended to disburse \$5 billion of additional aid annually by 2007, but in the first four years the total amount appropriated was only a little more than \$6 billion. To incentivize and facilitate real development progress, the MCA needs to show that *transformative* levels of aid are on offer, potentially for an extended period of time, if countries adhere to good governance standards and pro-development policies. As it becomes possible—hopefully with a sharp reduction of the U.S. budget deficit within a few years—to substantially increase overall U.S. foreign assistance, eligibility for general increases in aid should be influenced by MCA criteria.

A New Focus on Poverty Reduction

One of the things that emerging democracies have not done nearly well enough is to reduce absolute poverty. To be sure, countries like Chile, Brazil, and Mexico have recorded significant gains, but more needs to be done. It is not just a question of generating overall economic growth, because a rising tide does not necessarily lift all boats. And it is not simply a matter of ensuring that public resources are invested in health, education, and public infrastructure, as substantial pockets of poverty can persist even in the face of large overall investments. Reducing absolute poverty requires a smart mix of policies, informed by the lessons of what has worked in similar types of countries. Here, ideology on all sides should give way to practical experimentation and prag-

22. For a list, see <http://www.mcc.gov/countries/index>.

matic adoption of best practices. For example, from the experience of the above Latin American countries and others (like Peru) that have borrowed from their innovations, we know that conditional cash transfers can work to reduce absolute poverty. This involves giving monthly stipends to mothers in exchange for their honoring such basic obligations as inoculating their children, sending them to school, and obtaining pre- and post-natal check-ups. Other countries have had success with micro-enterprise loans and reforms to enable the poor to emerge out of the trap of informality by giving them title to their land and registering their businesses efficiently, without their having to run the gauntlet of multiple bureaucracies and demands for bribes.

In this respect, there are a few things that a democracy support strategy could do (and each of these could have welcome spillover effects for the broader global campaign to reduce absolute poverty). First, we should collaborate with other donors and with aid recipients to identify the policies and practices that are showing the most success in reducing poverty. Second, we should widely disseminate these policy lessons in low- and middle-income countries, not only among government officials but among policy institutes, academia, journalists, and civil society organizations as well. And third, we should seek to mobilize from within the international donor community new flows of resources to help fund the kinds of policies and programs that work to reduce poverty.

Multilateral Cooperation

More generally, a democracy support strategy should look for ways to cooperate with other democracies and work through regional and international organizations to support and defend struggling democracies. There is a certain tension between committing to support democracy and committing to work through multilateral channels. It is always easier, simpler, and quicker to act unilaterally. Coordination is time-consuming and tends to grind things down to a lower common denominator. Moreover, the United States often is inclined to take a more forthright approach to defending democracy and denouncing authoritarian abuses and regressions than many of its democratic allies. Thus, the United States should not surrender the prerogative of unilateral actions and declarations; no great power can. But we need to invest more in building up and working through multilateral channels, and in indicating our desire to do so.

One channel for doing so should of course be the United Nations (UN). With China and Russia exercising veto power on the UN Security Council, we cannot look to it as an instrument for democracy support. But we can enhance cooperation with the Democratic Governance program of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which spends more than a billion dollars a year to help develop parliaments, systems of local governance, electoral processes, access to information, more efficient public administration, and more accountable governance, especially in transitional and post-conflict countries.²³ Although many of these programs may suffer from the larger problems of bureaucracy and performance that plague the UN, they do mobilize valuable expertise, and they benefit from the greater legitimacy of the UN as a body. It would be worth reviewing these programs (and our own!) to see how they can work better. We should also continue to support and encourage broader financial support for the UN Democracy Fund, which has raised \$90 million so far for grants to support the development of democratic institutions and practices, including civil society. Beyond the tangible assistance, the symbolism of having the UN

23. See <http://www.undp.org/governance/>.

work explicitly on behalf of democracy is vitally important.²⁴ With the enhanced credibility and global appeal of President Obama, the United States should also campaign for election, at the next round, to the UN Human Rights Council, while working subtly to deny membership to egregious human rights abusers where possible.²⁵

Second, the United States should work with sympathetic countries to strengthen the democracy support work of regional organizations, particularly the Organization of American States (OAS) and the African Union (AU). The OAS has a much deeper history and more extensive institutions for this purpose, but it has not exercised the initiative it should have in recent years to assess crises of democracy in countries like Venezuela, Bolivia, and Nicaragua and press for greater adherence to democratic norms. A new U.S. administration, largely free of the anti-American sentiments that the Bush administration provoked, should be able to work with other democracies in the Americas to move the OAS toward more pro-active missions and actions in defense of democracy. And it might also encourage more cooperation between the OAS and the AU, and the EU and the AU, to strengthen AU mechanisms and capacities to do the same.

Third, although it is notoriously difficult to do, with many procedures yielding disappointing results, we should try to improve coordination among aid donors in three respects: (1) Exchanging strategies and programs, while looking for ways to leverage and complement them, to assist democratic development; (2) exploring whether we can make any common progress in implementing MCA-style principles of aid selectivity to generate incentives for better governance; and (3) exploring, perhaps on an experimental basis for some countries, the pooling into a single international fund of various bilateral and multilateral assistance flows to states so that they do not have to expend precious administrative time and talent negotiating with dozens of separate donors.

Finally, we must do more in other ways to advance cooperation among democracies for the defense of democracy and to strengthen international institutions for this purpose. In particular, we should work to invigorate the Community of Democracies (CD), a grouping of some 100 democracies around the world that was inaugurated in Warsaw in 2000 and has met at a ministerial level roughly biennially since then. Through its evolving institutions—an intergovernmental secretariat in Warsaw, a civil society secretariat in Washington, and an affiliated International Center for Democratic Transitions in Budapest—the Community of Democracies is developing a greater ability to undertake practical work to advance and secure democracy. This can include codifying member countries' best practices to alleviate poverty, combat corruption, reform campaign finance, and promote transparency, social inclusion, and women's empowerment, among other things.²⁶ Because it is the largest grouping of democracies in the world (including nearly all of them, though unfortunately also a few that do not qualify) and because it brings together rich and poor democracies as equals in a common framework, it has greater scope and legitimacy to

24. See the substantial discussion of the UN Democracy Fund and its relationship to global processes and other UN activities at <http://www.un.org/democracyfund/XSituatingDemocracy.htm>.

25. We are not likely to deny membership to major authoritarian states like Russia and China, which are now in fact members. But we can probably quietly lobby to prevent a repeat of the embarrassment of having a state like Cuba elected to membership (2006–2009). Fortunately, of the 47 members of the Council, a clear majority (I count 29, give or take a couple) are democracies today, and we could also work to ensure the election of more democratic states, and fewer, like Cameroon, that flatly fall short.

26. These and other ideas floated in this paragraph derive from a consultative process on the future of the CD undertaken by the (nongovernmental, Washington-based) Committee for a Community of Democracies (CCD) and are expressed in a memorandum that it submitted to President-elect Obama on November 26, 2008. (I served as chair for the CCD task force that produced the memorandum.)

undertake such work than any other multilateral body. The CD could also do much more, either on its own or in cooperation with regional organizations, to support and assist democracies in crisis, through study and mediation missions and coordination of expressions of concern on the part of individual democracies. It might provide a forum for democracy assistance donors to share their own best practices, review their policies and standards, and engage on a broad, multilateral basis civil society actors who are on the recipient end of the relationship. And it could certainly provide a means for all democracies, new and old, to consider some of their common challenges and needs for reform.

Enlivening the CD in this way will require some diplomatic work. Europe has stood off from the organization out of concern, especially among the French, that it is largely an American creation and remains too dominated by the United States. Such concern must be alleviated if sincere, high-level participation is to be forthcoming and the CD's potential is to be realized. In addition, structural reforms will be needed to the CD itself to facilitate meaningful action and ensure that members meet democratic standards.²⁷

Supporting Human Rights and Pro-Democracy Movements

I have stressed the strategic goal of defending, securing, and deepening existing democracies. But such a strategic focus can still allow for continuing efforts in authoritarian contexts to support democratic dissidents and civic organizations and movements working for democratic change. To draw a contrast with such efforts in the Bush administration might involve a philosophy of promising less and doing more. Some of the ways that the United States can be true to its values in this domain include: raising issues of severe human rights abuse in the UN Human Rights Council, in appropriate regional forums, and in demarches to individual governments; providing financial assistance to independent organizations and media, channeled principally through nongovernmental U.S. actors like NED; broadcasting independent news, analysis, and programs that convey democratic values and ideas, to (otherwise) closed societies; and working, where possible, through multilateral means to impose sanctions on the most abusive autocrats, particularly targeted sanctions on rulers and their extended families and support networks.

Mobilizing Domestic and Allied Consensus behind the New Approach

How would this strategy be articulated and how would support for it be mobilized?

It is important to begin by acknowledging the current conjuncture of danger and opportunity. Barack Obama has assumed the presidency at a moment of severe erosion in America's soft and hard power. Our military is overstretched, our government is in deep and mounting debt, our moral authority is severely depleted, our cultural preeminence is under challenge, and the American model of democracy and free-market capitalism has taken huge hits as a result of the financial collapse, the exposure of egregious acts of individual fraud and greed, and the many abuses of

27. Among the changes proposed by the CCD are rigorous evaluation of membership qualification by an independent international advisory group (which would also help countries falling short of democracy to identify and remedy the deficiencies); enlarging the Convening Group to include more significant democracies; and changing the voting rule within the Convening Group from pure consensus to a qualified majority, such as two-thirds.

constitutional and human rights norms by the Bush administration. The world is just plain tired of being lectured to by the United States. Yet, the election of Barack Obama to the presidency has already begun to reverse the damage to America's image and moral authority in the world. Partly this is due to the innovative and inspiring nature of his campaign, partly to the electrifying charisma and broad vision of the man, and partly to his background; after all, in what other established democracy could someone rise so fast from such a marginal status in race and origin to win the leadership of government? There is thus an opportunity to resuscitate a leadership role for America in advancing democracy globally, if it is done with a new tone and mindset.

In the first few months of his presidency, President Barack Obama will articulate his vision and place his strategic stamp on U.S. foreign policy. In doing so, he will surely draw distinctions between his approach and that of the last administration—for example, rejecting the language of “regime change” and the unilateral use of force or threats to achieve it. Although the early months of his presidency will be consumed with crises, domestic and foreign, they also present an opportunity to lay out a new grand strategy for advancing democracy and freedom in the world. The public declaration of this strategy might encompass the following nine points:

1. America's commitment to human rights, as codified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent international covenants and charters, endures. Support for the political rights and civil liberties of all peoples, including the rights of women and minorities, is a core principle of American society, enjoying bipartisan support, and the new administration will be forthright in expressing it.
2. The new administration affirms that the United States must and will honor its own obligations to human rights. Hence it bans the use of torture under any circumstance. And it affirms that detainees in U.S. custody, no matter their nationality or suspected crime, will have habeas corpus and due process and will be treated in a manner consistent with the Geneva Convention and other international legal standards.
3. The policy of the new administration will be to *support democracy* around the world. It is not the purpose of the United States to force our own system of government on other societies. Democracy can only be sustainable where it has local ownership and indigenous foundations. The principal drivers of democratic change must come from within each society and political system. But where countries try to make democracy work, we will vigorously support those efforts with economic development assistance and political assistance to both governmental institutions and a host of nongovernmental actors. And where broad demands for democracy are peacefully voiced, we will support them.
4. The defense of human rights and the advancement of freedom and democracy are most effective when pursued through multilateral means. The United States will strive to improve international institutions and make them work for these common ends. The United States will place a renewed emphasis on multilateral means and channels for securing human rights and improving democracy, through such instruments as the United Nations, regional organizations, and the Community of Democracies. Furthermore, we will work closely with our democratic allies to forge common approaches and coordinate strategies and programs of democratic assistance.
5. Fostering development, democracy, and good governance means forging partnerships between governments and between civil societies (as well as between governments and civil societies at

both ends of the assistance relationship). (As Barack Obama himself said in his major campaign statement on the subject, “We must lead not in the spirit of a patron, but the spirit of a partner.”²⁸) The principal American approach to economic and political assistance abroad will now be to respond to and support what people (though not necessarily governments) in transitional societies define as their needs for development, democracy, and better governance (at the local and national levels), rather than to impose our own preconceived agendas on them. This will require increased dialogue and engagement at many levels.

6. With this in mind, the United States will expand its efforts to build partnerships and foster exchanges between our own civil society and those in transitional countries. This will involve increased funding for nongovernmental organizations working in a myriad of ways with local partners abroad to enhance economic development, social empowerment, democracy, human rights, transparency, and the rule of law. And it will also mean greater investment in people-to-people exchanges that augment knowledge and skills in civil society and generate partnership ties.
7. The new administration supports the UN Millennium Development Goals of halving global poverty by 2015, though it recognizes that the financial crisis will make it more difficult to meet the goals within the declared time frame. The United States will intensify its commitment “to build healthy and educated communities, reduce poverty, develop markets, and generate wealth” around the world,²⁹ and it will substantially increase development assistance as resources permit—and as states show they have the transparency and accountability to use these resources effectively.
8. To prepare more countries to qualify for increased development assistance and use it effectively, the United States will redouble attention to and assistance for a variety of initiatives to control corruption. Support for independent media, think tanks, and NGOs, including local chapters of Transparency International, working to fight corruption and improve national systems of accountability will be increased. Auditing and evaluation of assistance and grants will be intensified. Cooperative efforts among democracies will be sought to identify best institutional designs and practices for controlling corruption and fraud. U.S. public diplomacy, including international broadcasting, will give priority to educating and empowering citizens in the struggle for transparency and good governance. And new initiatives will be undertaken in the international banking community to make it easier to expose the hidden assets of corruption public servants and to return ill-gotten wealth to the country of origin.
9. We begin this new chapter in America’s global engagement with a sense of humility and a new readiness to frankly confront the flaws in our own system. As we renew our global commitment to securing liberty, we realize that our own democracy is imperfect, that democracy is everywhere an unfinished journey, and that all democracies, new and old, can learn from one another and benefit from cooperation to address the challenges they face in common. These include not only such policy imperatives as reducing poverty and converting to renewable energy, but the procedural challenges of expanding and deepening citizen participation; utilizing information technology to make governments more transparent and citizens more powerful;

28. “Strengthening Our Common Security by Investing in Our Common Humanity,” p. 1, http://www.barackobama.com/pdf/issues/Fact_Sheet_Foreign_Policy_Democratization_and_Development_FINAL.pdf, accessed on November 24, 2008. This statement has no publication date but it was drafted and released during the primary election campaign (probably in the second half of 2007).

29. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

controlling corruption and the undue influence of special interests; ensuring a level playing field in electoral competition; and balancing the war on terror with the rights of the individual.

Such an approach would likely be enthusiastically received by most societies in the world (if not all leaders in the world). It would not steer the United States completely away from conflict with states that abuse human rights, but it would mitigate some of the suspicion that we are simply trying to overthrow regimes we do not like. It would bring our geopolitical goals for democratic change more into line with our means. It would not abandon advocates for democracy in autocratic or oppressive circumstances, but it would also not make promises we could not keep about American diplomatic devotion to a “transformational” agenda for their country. Hence it would narrow the gap between rhetoric and reality in America’s engagement with authoritarian regimes, while still leaving open the possibility of our pressing more concretely for electoral transparency, media freedom, associational pluralism, and judicial independence where we feel such diplomatic support can make a difference.

Our democratic allies would welcome the shift toward greater cooperation and multilateral engagement, and the world in general would welcome the more humble and circumspect tone, the greater respect for international institutions and norms, and the new commitment to global development goals. The emphasis on “support” and “partnerships” would remove at least some of the resentment of what has been seen as American arrogance, superiority, and self-righteousness not just in pressing for political change but even in the tone and structure of some U.S. development assistance programs. Other countries would respect and respond to our willingness to be self-critical and to recognize that corruption is a problem that afflicts all countries to one degree or another and that requires not only local political will but international cooperation to contain.

Of course, authoritarian and corrupt regimes would not like the heightened emphasis on good governance standards in the allocation of development assistance. Some critics argue that the world does not like it either, that people in poor countries resent our making these judgments and imposing these expectations. This has not been my experience, however. People in Africa feel very broad disgust with corruption and a pervasive hunger to see the international community press their leaders to get serious about development rather than just enriching themselves and their cronies. If the process is seen as objective, fair, and relatively free of strategic (global power) motivations and if it is well explained through public diplomacy, it could garner vigorous support in societies that truly need help. It is important to emphasize that the shift toward more “selectivity” and performance-based incentives in foreign aid (along MCA principles) would not mean abandoning efforts to deliver public health, economic, and humanitarian assistance in badly governed states. But it would mean that better governed countries would get more and that our efforts in badly governed states would seek to bypass corrupt state structures that will divert most of the aid to private ends anyway. People in these latter societies are smart enough to know that unconditional aid to their rotten governments does not translate into help for them.

Obviously, conditioning aid flows on better governance will be more effective and less subject to charges of American arrogance or a hidden agenda if it happens multilaterally. The global system of development assistance urgently needs reform to get better results, and partial reform (or reform by individual donors) is better than none at all. But a better outcome by far would be for the Obama administration to use its moral and political capital to fashion a wider reorientation, both among multilateral donors like the World Bank and among the various bilateral donors. It is of course too much to expect that the international donor community is suddenly going to stop

feeding the beast of rotten, unaccountable governance altogether. For one thing, strategic considerations will still enter in. The United States will continue to wage a global war on terror. China does not give a damn about what kind of government it aids; as a rising global superpower, it seeks strategic influence, raw materials, and market access wherever it can find them. And the pressure on global institutions, like the World Bank and the UNDP, to provide aid essentially everywhere will remain strong. But, as I have indicated, the UNDP is already investing a lot of its budget on democracy and governance programs, and it could more and better. And the World Bank is becoming more sensitive, at least in principle, to the problem that endemic corruption poses for aid effectiveness.

In fact, the world has become more sympathetic to democracy assistance. Over the past 10 to 15 years, there has been significant growth of rules, mechanisms, and institutions to support and defend democracy, monitor elections, sanction coups, advance human rights, assist civil society, and strengthen representative bodies in such regional organizations as the OAS, the AU, and the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), among others.³⁰

Within the United States, the above approach offers the best prospect of forging a new bipartisan consensus behind a pro-democracy foreign policy. Apart from the fact that it has not worked, the more brash and assertive approach of the Bush administration has exhausted itself and is no longer politically viable at home or abroad. At the same time, even the most implacable realists and impassioned critics of the Bush foreign policy have come to at least a grudging acceptance of democracy assistance programs as a worthwhile (or at a minimum, innocuous) thing to do. These days, few significant voices in American politics or foreign policy much object to maintaining practical flows of assistance to governmental and civil society institutions in emerging democracies.³¹ There is even a certain political irony in the high-profile crash of Bush's inflated freedom agenda. By staking out such an extravagant and radical position, Bush has made more established, modest, and prosaic efforts to support democratic development seem quite reasonable and unobjectionable by comparison. Again, "democracy support" seems to strike the right tone for the time—incremental, softer-spoken, and sustainable.

The shift to a more multilateral tone and approach will raise the hackles of neoconservatives now and then, but even many on the Republican side believe it is long overdue, and most Americans recognize now that we need to manifest a more decent respect for the opinions of other countries. The American people want to see the United States respected (if not admired) in the world again and will also support prudent measures to bring our treatment of detainees into line with international conventions.

With respect to development assistance, there is no way domestic political support could be mobilized for a substantial overall increase in spending without tying it to new efforts to fight corruption and achieve effectiveness. The early Obama campaign goal of doubling U.S. foreign

30. Diamond, *The Spirit of Democracy*, chapter 6.

31. Note, for example, these statements by two prominent conservative realists: "Encouraging democracy' is not a controversial position. Nearly everyone in the world accepts that the sole superpower is entitled and indeed expected to be true to its core values. 'Promoting' democracy is vaguer and potentially more costly. Still, if the United States does so without resorting to military force and takes into account the circumstances and perspectives of other nations, then it is likely not to run into too much international opposition. 'Spreading' democracy, however, particularly spreading it by force... is a different thing altogether." Robert F. Ellsworth and Dmitri K. Simes, "Realism's Shining Morality: The Post-Election Trajectory of U.S. Foreign Policy," *The National Interest* (Winter 2004/05): 6.

assistance, to \$50 billion,³² seems politically feasible until the United States rebounds from the current recession and brings down the budget deficit. But polls show that, once informed of how little the United States really spends on foreign aid, the public might come around to accept a significant increase in aid if it is framed as investing in a more stable world, helping countries to help themselves, and helping countries to build the democratic and rule-of-law institutions that would enable them to help themselves.³³

Conclusion

Some of what I propose here builds on established and successful foundations. Some involves new priorities and initiatives that amount to a shift in strategic emphasis. And some of it involves a rhetorical reframing of what we are in essence already doing. I believe that this reframed global strategy of “democracy support” offers the best chance of garnering broad domestic and international acceptance and that it represents the best way to leverage our financial and diplomatic resources to make the world more democratic.

There is one final respect in which the approach is highly strategic, though it would require a separate chapter to justify the assertion. Once democracies do achieve consolidation—in terms of rooted institutions, deep popular support, and reasonably effective governance—they seem to acquire an ability to endure even at levels of economic development well below that magic threshold (of about \$10,000 per capita in current purchasing power parity dollars) above which no democracy has ever broken down.³⁴ The experiences over the last few decades of such developing democracies as India, Costa Rica, Mauritius, and Botswana are instructive in this regard.

If, over the next decade or two, a strategy of democracy support succeeded in raising a significant number of the insecure democracies to this level of stability and this higher quality of democracy, the global prospects for freedom in the world would improve dramatically. There would be many more success stories to show that democracy can work to solve the problems of developing countries. There would therefore be within each region (save for the toughest one, the Middle East, which needs its own special strategy) multiple points of diffusion of democratic norms and practices. And there would be more democracies with the capacity and self-confidence to cooperate in aiding democrats in more difficult places.

It is within our reach to help the world’s many struggling democracies to get to that point. But these democracies continue to struggle for good reasons, and only a comprehensive, well crafted and resourced strategy will bear a good prospect of success. The alternative would be to watch while possibly much of the democratic progress of the last two decades is reversed, with grim implications for peace and freedom around the world, not to mention our own national security.

32. “Strengthening Our Common Security by Investing in Our Common Humanity,” p. 2.

33. These are some of the general findings of an extensive public opinion survey conducted for the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network shortly after the November 2008 election.

34. Diamond, *The Spirit of Democracy*, p. 97.

Figure 3.1. Ratio of Gains to Declines in Freedom, 1991–2008

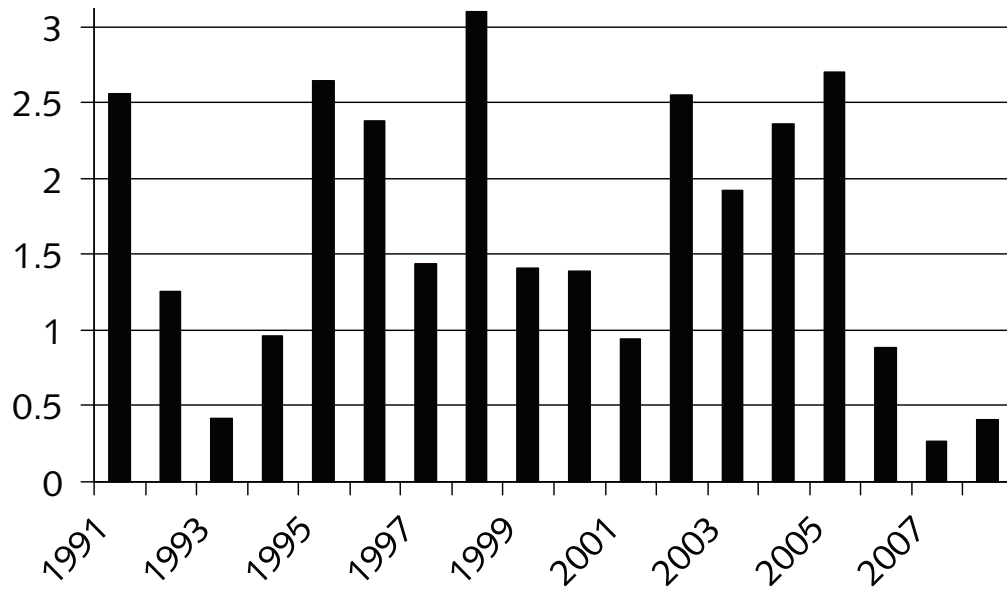


Table 3.1. Classification of Regimes

Liberal Democracy, FH 1–2.0*	Electoral Democracy, FH>2.0*	Competitive Authoritarian	Electoral (Hegemonic) Authoritarian	Politically Closed Authoritarian
Western Europe (24 states)				
United States (1,1)				
Canada (1,1)				
Australia (1,1)				
New Zealand (1,1)				
Post-Communist (CEU & FSU) (28) 17 democracies				
Czech Republic (1,1)	Ukraine (3,2)	Georgia (4,4)	Azerbaijan (6,5)	Turkmenistan (7,7)
Hungary (1,1)	Serbia (3,2)	Kyrgyzstan (5,4)	Kazakhstan (6,5)	Uzbekistan (7,7)
Poland (1,1)	Albania (3,3)	Armenia (6,4)	Russia (6,5)	
Slovakia (1,1)	Macedonia (3,3)		Tajikistan (6,5)	
Slovenia (1,1)	Montenegro (3,3)		Belarus (7,6)	
Estonia (1,1)	Bosnia-Herzegovina (4,3)			
Lithuania (1,1)	Moldova (4,4)			
Latvia (2,1)				
Bulgaria (2,2)				
Croatia (2,2)				
Romania (2,2)				
Latin America and the Caribbean (33)				
9 Caribbean States ^a with pop.<1 million	El Salvador (2,3)	Nicaragua (4,3) [†]		Cuba (7,6)
Chile (1,1)	Jamaica (2,3)	Venezuela (4,4) [†]		
Costa Rica (1,1)	Guyana (2,3)	Haiti (4,5) [†]		
Uruguay (1,1)	Mexico (2,3)			
Panama (1,2)	Peru (2,3)			
Argentina (2,2)	Bolivia (3,3)			
Brazil (2,2)	Ecuador (3,3)			
Dominican Republic (2,2)	Honduras (3,3)			
Suriname (2,2)	Paraguay (3,3)			
Trinidad & Tobago (2,2)	Colombia (3,4)			
	Guatemala (3,4)			

(continued next page)

Table 3.1. Classification of Regimes *(continued)*

Liberal Democracy, FH 1–2.0*	Electoral Democracy, FH>2.0*	Competitive Authoritarian	Electoral (Hegemonic) Authoritarian	Politically Closed Authoritarian
Asia (E, SE, & S) (25)				
Japan (1,2)	India (2,3)	Philippines (4,3)	Singapore (5,4)	Brunei (6,5)
S. Korea (1,2)	Indonesia (2,3)	Malaysia (4,4)	Cambodia (6,5)	Vietnam (7,5)
Taiwan (2,1)	East Timor (3,4)	Maldives (4,4)		China (7,6)
Mongolia (2,2)	Bangladesh (4,4)	Nepal (4,4)		Laos (7,6)
	Sri Lanka (4,4)	Bhutan (4,5)		Burma (7,7)
		Pakistan (4,5)		N Korea (7,7)
		Thailand (5,4)		
		Afghanistan (5,6)		
Pacific Island (12)				
8 Pacific Island States ^b	Papua New Guinea (4,3)	Solomon Islands (4,3)	Fiji (6,4)	
		Tonga (5,3) [†]		
Africa (Sub-Saharan) (48)				
Cape Verde (1,1)	Lesotho (2,3)	Kenya (4,3)	Burkina Faso (5,3)	Cote d'Ivoire (6,5)
Ghana (1,2)	Mali (2,3)	Tanzania (4,3)	Gambia (5,4)	Mauritania (6,5)
Mauritius (1,2)	Mozambique (3,3)	Nigeria (5,4)	Ethiopia (5,5)	Swaziland (7,5) [†]
Benin (2,2)	Senegal (3,3)	Uganda (5,4)	Gabon (6,4)	Eritrea (7,6)
Botswana (2,2)	Seychelles (3,3)	Central African Republic (5,5)	Angola (6,5)	
Sao Tome & Principe (2,2)	Sierra Leone (3,3)	Djibouti (5,5)	Congo, People Rep (6,5)	Somalia (7,7)
South Africa (2,2)	Zambia (3,3)	Congo, Dem. Rep. (6,6)	Rwanda (6,5)	Sudan (7,7)
Namibia (2,2)	Comoros (3,4)		Togo (6,5)	Equatorial Guinea (7,7)
	Liberia (3,4)		Cameroon (6,6)	
	Niger (3,4)		Chad (6,6)	
	Madagascar (4,3)		Guinea (7,5)	
	Guinea-Bissau (4,4)		Zimbabwe (7,6)	
	Malawi (4,4)			
	Burundi (4,5)			

(continued next page)

Table 3.1 Classification of Regimes (*continued*)

Liberal Democracy, FH 1–2.0*	Electoral Democracy, FH>2.0*	Competitive Authoritarian	Electoral (Hegemonic) Authoritarian	Politically Closed Authoritarian
Middle East–North Africa (19)				
Israel (1,2)	Turkey (3,3)	Lebanon (5,4)	Kuwait [†] (4,4)	Bahrain [†] (5,5)
		Morocco [†] (5,4)	Egypt (6,5)	Oman [†] (6,5)
		Jordan [†] (5,5)	Algeria (6,5)	Qatar [†] (6,5)
		Yemen (5,5)	Tunisia (7,5)	United Arab Emir- ates [†] (6,5)
		Iraq (6,6)		Saudi Arabia [†] (7,6)
		Iran (6,6)		Libya (7,7)
				Syria (7,6)

Principal source: Freedom House, *2008 Freedom in the World Survey*, <http://www.freedomhouse.org>.

* Freedom House (FH) scales of political rights and civil liberties, where 1 means most free or democratic and 7 means most repressive. The numerical scores here are from Freedom House but the ratings of regime type are mine. I have reclassified as authoritarian three Latin American cases that Freedom House classifies as democracies.

[†] Traditional monarchy.

* Ambiguous case that is classified as a democracy by Freedom House.

Notes

- a. Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & Grenadines.
- b. Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

4

RECONCEPTUALIZING DEMOCRACIES AND EMPOWERING THEM TO DELIVER

Francis Fukuyama

One of the persistent criticisms of American democracy assistance has been that it has focused excessively on the initial breakthrough to democracy rather than on democratic consolidation and on procedural aspects like free and fair elections at the expense of broadly accountable and effective governance. Although this charge is often overdrawn, it is in fact the case that democracy assistance is usually placed in its own category, separate from rule of law assistance, general development assistance, humanitarian relief, or policy assistance to democratic regimes. This conceptual compartmentalization is reflected in the bureaucratically fragmented way in which these different types of assistance are delivered to countries by the United States. There is seldom an overarching strategy that puts democracy assistance in the context of development more broadly and that then relates broad development to U.S. foreign policy goals.

It should be obvious that if the United States is to have strong and reliable democratic partners around the world, those partners must not merely legitimate themselves through elections, but must also be seen as delivering on the promises made in election campaigns. Democratic governments that are weak, corrupt, or ineffective undermine their own legitimacy and create openings for antidemocratic forces. Moreover, formal democracy tends to not to work well in countries with high degrees of inequality, in which marginalized populations do not feel they have a stake in the system. The middle classes typically seen as providing bedrock social support for democracy oftentimes will not do so if they feel that democracy will bring redistributive demands that will undermine their own economic positions. Thus the ability of governments to deliver on other aspects of development—like broadly distributed economic well-being, a rule of law that is accessible to the poor, and social services seen as public goods rather than the payoffs of patronage—are important to the strength and stability of democratic regimes.

There is also an important security component to development, one that has been both recognized and exploited since September 11. Counterinsurgency warfare, whether waged in Iraq and Afghanistan or against al Qaeda more generally, is a highly political strategy in which use of force is undertaken only in the context of a broader hearts-and-minds campaign designed to separate insurgents or terrorists from the broader society within which they operate. An important component of winning popular support is the ability to deliver reconstruction and development services, often under stressful conflict or post-conflict conditions. Thus development has increasingly been incorporated into military strategy and operations, whether at the level of a Provincial Reconstruction Team or a national counterinsurgency strategy.

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This chapter examines how democracy assistance ought to be situated with respect to the other dimensions of development. It begins with a discussion of how these dimensions relate to one another empirically, based on a rather large literature on this subject. It then goes on to discuss contemporary debates over sequencing and how the different dimensions of development fit together under different types of development strategies. Finally, the chapter suggests how these other dimensions of development might be better integrated into U.S. foreign policy, including issues of implementation that such a strategy would entail.

The Dimensions of Development: How Are They Related?

There are five broad dimensions of development—one economic, one social, and three political:

- economic growth
- social mobilization/development of civil society
- state-building
- rule of law
- electoral democracy

I will discuss each of these dimensions as an entry point for development and as an objective of development in itself. Obviously, each dimension contains within itself a vast number of goals and approaches. What I seek to do here is not to choose one over another, but to begin to understand how they are related to one another.

1. *Economic growth.* Economic growth for present purposes is defined in a narrow, traditional sense, as increasing per capita GDP. Much of the field of development economics has centered on strategies for promoting growth and has been characterized by numerous approaches, fads, and orthodoxies over the years. Some growth strategies result in a more egalitarian income distribution than others—a variation that, as will become evident, can be relevant for the longer-term sustainability of a country's development path. Many East Asian fast developers like Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan pursued industrial policies involving targeted credits and managed sectoral transitions. By contrast, the 1980s and 1990s saw the rise of a very different approach, the so-called Washington Consensus that sought to reduce state intervention in favor of market pricing. It is not necessary to rehash familiar arguments over the relative merits of these and other economic strategies, except to note that, in addition to differing in their implications for income distribution, they have rather different political and institutional requirements. As Stephan Haggard suggests, industrial policies can be made to work, but require a substantially greater degree of technocratic capacity to manage properly than ones that rely on market pricing.¹ Equally important, they are liable to capture by various political actors seeking rents and have to be carefully insulated from them.
2. *Social mobilization/development of civil society.* A large body of social thought details the social changes that occur as a primarily agricultural society shifts to an industrial one. In the former,

1. Stephan Haggard, "The Politics of the Asian Financial Crisis," *Journal of Democracy* 11, no. 2 (2000): 130–144.

social relationships are often ascriptive rather than voluntary, based on kinship, ethnicity, social class, and gender. Social hierarchies are often inherited, with few opportunities for individuals to change the status into which they were born. In addition, the division of labor is limited by the small size of the market economy and nonagricultural sector. A modern civil society emerges when social groups between the family and the state are able to freely organize on the basis of shared passions and interests. Developed societies remain hierarchical, but hierarchies ideally are more fluid and accessible; social mobility and representation increase.

3. *State-building.* State-building is itself a multidimensional phenomenon that is the precursor of, and necessary condition for, either liberal rule of law or democracy. This discussion makes use of Max Weber's famous definition of the state: a legitimate monopoly of force over a defined territory. State-building begins with a concentration of coercive power in the hands of the state, through the disarming or absorption of private militias and the creation of a national army and police. It also involves defining the state's territorial extent (by either incorporating or sloughing off particular geographical regions) and extending the reach of the state's enforcement power over that territory. Finally, state-building involves creating administrative capacity in the form of public bureaucracies. Core state functions (beyond internal and external security) include the ability to extract taxes, the ability to budget and spend money, and the ability to make and enforce laws. In more established states, state-building can also refer to the expansion of state functions, improvement of state efficiency in provision of services, and the like.
4. *Rule of law.* Although state-building involves the concentration of power in the state's hands, establishment of modern liberal democratic political institutions limits that power by reducing the state's discretionary use of coercion. The "liberal" part of liberal democracy is rule of law. Rule of law is the basis for property rights and the adjudication of commercial claims and thus is key to sustained economic development. Rule of law is also the basis for the protection of a private sphere and individual human rights. Legal rights do not have to be universal; in some societies, they are enjoyed only by elites who benefit from the full privileges of citizenship. Universalization of the rule of law permits larger markets, greater competition, and, in the long run, more economic growth.
5. *Electoral democracy.* The second aspect of liberal democratic political institutions is democracy—that is, popular sovereignty through regular multiparty elections. Democracy can involve a number of different mechanisms for holding governments accountable to the people. Besides elections, there are other mechanisms of accountability as well such as separated powers that monitor the behavior of individuals, and a free press and civil society outside of the formal political system can monitor and check the government's performance. As in the case of rule of law, democracy puts limits on the state's discretion and forces it to reflect the will of at least some important proportion of the people.

All five of these dimensions are goals of development in themselves, and they can exist, for the most part, independently of one another—that is, one can have growth without social development, and social development without increases in either state capacity or democracy. It is possible to have an illiberal democracy and a liberal autocracy, and both democracies and autocracies can experience either low or high growth. Although a rudimentary state is a necessary precondition for economic growth, rule of law, and democracy, it is also possible to have some or all of the latter three conditions in a weak state.

A sixth, intangible factor is critical to development—the credibility and legitimacy of the state. Credibility has to do with expectations that the government will do what it promises, whether that is upholding individual human rights or protecting the interests of property owners. Legitimacy has to do with the degree to which the society’s citizens believe that the system as a whole is just and deserving of their support (even if they disagree with certain of the government’s policies). Credibility and legitimacy are related to the five main channels of development described above—whether, for example, the benefits of growth are perceived to be shared—but are not simply co-terminous with any of them. They arise as byproducts of the other channels, but are not in themselves beginning points for development.

On the other hand, we know that certain presumed causal relationships between certain of these dimensions can form the basis for development strategies. The presumption of causality is based on a combination of theoretical reasoning and empirical correlations between the different phenomena. Although the exact causal pathways are often not precisely understood (for example, between development and democracy), some plausible relationships include the following:

- *Between state-building and growth.* Basic state formation is a precondition for growth. Economist Paul Collier has demonstrated the converse of this proposition—namely, that civil war and interstate conflict have very negative consequences for economic growth.² Having a Weberian state at peace is a precondition not just for growth, but for virtually all of the other development objectives (fair distribution, rule of law, democracy).

Beyond establishment of a state that can provide for basic order, greater administrative capacity is also strongly correlated with economic growth. This is particularly true at low absolute levels of per capita GDP (that is, less than \$1,000); though it remains important at higher levels of income, the impact may not be proportionate. In addition, a large literature links good governance to economic growth. There is a debate over the direction of causality here, with economist Jeffrey Sachs maintaining that governance is endogenous to growth.³ Sachs’s critic William Easterly has argued that the causality goes the other way.⁴ It would seem likely that causality here is bidirectional and that economic growth facilitates greater state administrative capacity.

- *Between liberal rule of law and growth.* There is a large literature demonstrating the correlation between property rights (and a supporting rule of law) and growth.⁵ Although most economists take this for granted, an interesting new literature shows that growth can also occur under situations where property rights and rule of law are not universal—that is, where elites grant rents to themselves.⁶

2. Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done about It* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

3. See Jeffrey Sachs and John W. McArthur, *Institutions and Geography: Comment on Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson (2000)*, National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) Working Paper 8114 (Cambridge, Mass.: NBER, 2001).

4. William R. Easterly, *The Elusive Quest for Growth: Economists’ Adventures and Misadventures in the Tropics* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001).

5. Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson et al., “The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation,” *American Economic Review* 91, no. 5 (2005): 1369–1401.

6. Stephen Haber and Armando Razo et al., *The Politics of Property Rights* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); and Mushtaq H. Khan and Kwame Sundaram Jomo, *Rents, Rent-Seeking and Economic Development: Theory and Evidence in Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

- *Between economic growth and stable democracy.* Beginning with sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset in 1958,⁷ there has been a large literature linking development and democracy.⁸ The relationship between growth and democracy may not be linear; Robert Barro shows that it is stronger at lower and weaker at middle levels of income.⁹ Przeworski, Alvarez, and Limongi show that democratic transitions, though they can occur at any level of development, are much less likely to be reversed past a level of about \$6,000 per capita.¹⁰ The evidence linking democracy to economic growth is much less clear; what the data show is a much wider variance in the economic performance of autocracies than democracies.
- *Between liberal rule of law and democracy.* Although we do not know of empirical studies explicitly correlating these factors, we presume it must be true because there are many examples of liberal democracy and relatively few cases of liberal autocracy (though perhaps more in the past). Whether a causal connection exists, as Marc Plattner suggests,¹¹ is not clear, but may well be so.
- *Between growth and the development of civil society.* A lot of classic social theory predicates the emergence of modern civil society on economic development (see, for example, work by Ernest Gellner).¹² Adam Smith in the *Wealth of Nations* notes that the extent of the market determines the division of labor; as growth occurs and firms take advantage of economies of scale, social specialization increases, and new social groups (e.g., an industrial working class) emerge. The fluidity and open access demanded by modern market economies undermines certain traditional forms of authority and forces the replacement of ascriptive with voluntary social groups.
- *Between social mobilization and liberal democracy.* From Alexis de Tocqueville onward, there has been a large body of democratic theory arguing that modern liberal democracy cannot exist without a vigorous civil society. The latter allows weak individuals to pool their interests and enter the political system; even when social groups do not seek political objectives, voluntary associations have spillover effects in creating social capital. A highly developed civil society also poses dangers for democracy as well: groups based on ethnic or racial chauvinism spread intolerance; interest groups can invest effort in zero-sum rent seeking; excessive politicization of economic and social conflicts can paralyze societies and undermine the legitimacy of democratic institutions.¹³ The correlation that exists between economic growth and stable liberal democracy¹⁴ is presumably mediated by this channel: growth entails the emergence of new social actors who then demand representation in a more open political system.
- *Between the development of civil society and state-building.* There are two opposing propositions as to the "sign" of the coefficient that links these two dimensions. Samuel Huntington argued

7. Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 53 (1959): 69–105.

8. Larry Diamond, "Economic Development and Democracy Reconsidered," *American Behavioral Scientist* 15, nos. 4–5 (1992): 450–499.

9. Robert J. Barro, *Determinants of Economic Growth: A Cross-Country Survey* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997).

10. Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi et al., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Material Well-being in the World, 1950–1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

11. Marc F. Plattner, "From Liberalism to Illiberal Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 10 (1999): 121–134.

12. Ernest Gellner, *Conditions of Liberty: Civil Society and Its Rivals* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1994).

13. Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1982).

14. Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy"; Przeworski and Limongi et al., *Democracy and Development*.

that there was often a negative relationship between the mobilization of new social actors and political order when existing political institutions could not accommodate their demands for participation.¹⁵ On the other hand, contemporary thinking about governance reform asserts that civil society, in the form of free media and organized citizens' groups, are necessary to promote transparency with regard to the quality of government and accountability when abuses are uncovered. Plausibly, which of these opposing propositions is dominant depends on a country's institutional starting point—with the former proposition more relevant in settings where political institutions and state capacities are especially weak.

Development Strategies

In theory, any of the five dimensions of development could in theory serve as an entry point to the others, but in practice the range of plausible sequences is more limited. It is very hard to have either rule of law or democracy, for example, without a state, and state-building has historically preceded the emergence of liberal democratic institutions virtually everywhere.

The longest-standing debate concerns the relative priority of political and economic development, with one important school prioritizing some combination of economic development, state-building, and rule of law over democracy or social mobilization. Huntington, noting that there was often a negative correlation between social mobilization and state-building, argued in favor of what came to be called the “authoritarian transition”—that is, emphasizing economic growth and state-building in early stages of development and putting off transition to democracy until later.¹⁶ Similarly, Fareed Zakaria pointed to a much stronger correlation between rule of law and economic growth than between democracy and growth and consequently argued in favor of liberal autocracy over illiberal democracy as a platform for economic growth.¹⁷ The strong correlation that exists between high levels of development and stable democracy has suggested to both authors that democracy will eventually emerge once a country makes the transition past the \$8,000 per capita threshold.¹⁸

A number of countries followed this sequence. South Korea and Taiwan, for example, both emphasized state-building and economic growth in the 1950s, phased in rule of law in the 1960s and 1970s, and transitioned to democracy only in the 1980s as they approached the \$8,000 threshold. In South Korea, the importance of the social channel as a link between economic development and democracy was particularly evident: the country's rapid growth created a host of new social actors, including an industrial working class, university students, religious organizations, and the like. The military dictatorship stepped down in 1987 the face of a newly mobilized civil society.

The authoritarian transition has been strongly criticized, however, as a general development strategy, most recently by Thomas Carothers.¹⁹ The success of this sequence depends on the existence of liberal autocracies, a category of countries virtually nonexistent outside of East Asia.

15. Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1968).

16. *Ibid.*

17. Fareed Zakaria, *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2003).

18. The Przeworski-Limogi et al. findings use a threshold of U.S.\$6,000 in 1991 parity purchasing power terms; \$8,000 is approximately the same level for the mid-2000s adjusted for inflation.

19. Thomas Carothers, “The ‘Sequencing’ Fallacy,” *Journal of Democracy* 18, no. 1 (2007): 12–27.

Many authoritarian rulers are not interested in rule of law, are corrupt and do not pursue good development policies, and indeed preside over states that are predatory rather than developmental. Often, authoritarian leaders who do pursue pro-development policies early on (like Uganda's Museveni or Ethiopia's Zenawi) do not stick with them over time; the absence of democracy means there is no check on their power. By contrast, it is usually the same political actors who push simultaneously for liberal rule of law *and* democracy.²⁰ Separating the two is therefore not a feasible alternative.

There is a further question of whether good institutions (liberal rule of law or democracy) will develop endogenously as a result of economic growth, as proponents of the authoritarian transition suggest, and whether premature democratic transition will be harmful to either economic growth or political stability. This question is of great interest, given the apparent success of authoritarian modernization in both China and Russia: do either represent a long-term, stable alternative to liberal democracy? The answer here is unfortunately quite complex.

Theories about the endogeneity of democratic institutions have typically argued that (1) growth produces social mobilization and new social actors, who then press demands either for new institutions or for participation in existing institutions; and (2) that the emergence of a middle class that owns property leads to demands for property rights and political participation.

The problem with these theories is that structural factors do not bring about transitions on their own in the absence of human agency.²¹ Although economic growth may stimulate the emergence of civil society, the latter has to be organized and led by political actors who want liberal democracy. When and if such actors will emerge is highly contingent; Ukraine would never have experienced the Orange Revolution but for the murder of the journalist Georgyi Gongadze and the manipulation of the 2004 presidential election by Leonid Kuchma.

The presence or absence of human agents demanding institutional change depends on a host of short-range factors unrelated to structural change. For example, the formative experiences of the Russian elite under the age of 40 was not of Communism, but of the collapse of the Soviet Union in the Yeltsin years, which many perceive to be a time of weakness, chaos, and humiliation. These feelings seem to override whatever long-term interest they may have in the development of a rule of law and of genuine democracy.

In China, the pattern is different, but not necessarily more conducive to the near-term emergence of democracy. The Chinese elite and middle class created by growth over the past generation shares with the Russian elite a fear of social instability associated with democracy. The Chinese middle class may be interested in development of rule of law to a greater extent than the Russian one. But since Tiananmen Square, they have been largely co-opted by the Communist regime that has succeeded in protecting their rights and interests in the absence of democracy.²² Economic growth, moreover, has created an enormous degree of economic equality, with large parts of the Chinese population failing to share in it. China's gini coefficient has gone from 40.7 in 1994 to

20. Plattner, "From Liberalism to Illiberal Democracy," 121–134.

21. Philippe C. Schmitter, Guillermo O'Donnell, and Laurence Whitehead, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); Larry Diamond, *The Spirit of Democracy: The Struggle to Build Free Societies throughout the World* (New York: Times Books, 2008).

22. Minxin Pei, *China's Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

47.3 in 2004, with the top 10 percent of Chinese now earning more than 12 times as much as the bottom 10 percent. The social consequences of this are evident in the continuing acts of protest and violence by the poor—mostly peasants living in the country’s interior—that occur on a weekly basis around the country. The Chinese middle class today would find its interests highly threatened by a near-term transition to democracy that would unleash huge demands for redistribution at its expense.²³

Something similar has happened in Thailand as well. When the military government was forced to step down in 1992, the new emergent Thai middle classes spawned by that country’s rapid economic growth were widely credited with spearheading the successful pro-democracy movement. However, with election of Thaksin Shinawatra as prime minister, these same middle classes began demonstrating to force Thaksin out of office for alleged corruption and mismanagement. It was not just corruption but the pro-rural poor, populist policies of Thaksin’s Thai Rak Thai party that seemed to upset better educated middle-class voters. Many of them passively (and sometimes actively) supported the military coup of December 2006 that forced Thaksin into exile and continue to support extralegal efforts to drive his successors from office.

Finally, it is worth considering the reverse causal relationship between democracy, social mobilization, and economic growth. In situations where a country has a corrupt, feckless democracy or a corrupt and antidevelopment authoritarian government, greater social mobilization and more democracy may actually constitute the only possible route toward better governance and hence, in the long term, toward better economic growth. A case in point in Ukraine: In the period after 2001, Ukraine suffered from economic decline, high levels of corruption, lack of transparency, and what seemed to be an unaccountable political system. As a result of the Orange Revolution in December 2004, the political system was forced to annul an election and the presidency was taken by the opposition Orange Coalition. Although Ukraine since then continues to suffer from corruption and lack of transparency, its political system has nonetheless arguably been forced to open up to a much wider range of social actors than previously. Oligarchic manipulation of politics continues, but its impact is arguably weaker. Ukraine’s economic performance after 2005 has been stronger than Russia’s, which was moving in the opposite direction with regard to accountability.

For certain middle-income countries like Brazil, Colombia, and Peru, increasing the quality of democracy is a potential entry point to strengthening rule of law and, down the road, improving economic performance. The rising quantity and quality of democratic participation in all three countries over the past 30 years, coupled with constitutional changes devolving greater power to municipalities and local governments, have had the effect of increasing the accountability of many politicians to their electorates. In Brazil, for example, voters in state elections have started to punish old-style patronage politicians at the polls and have rewarded those providing genuine public goods.²⁴

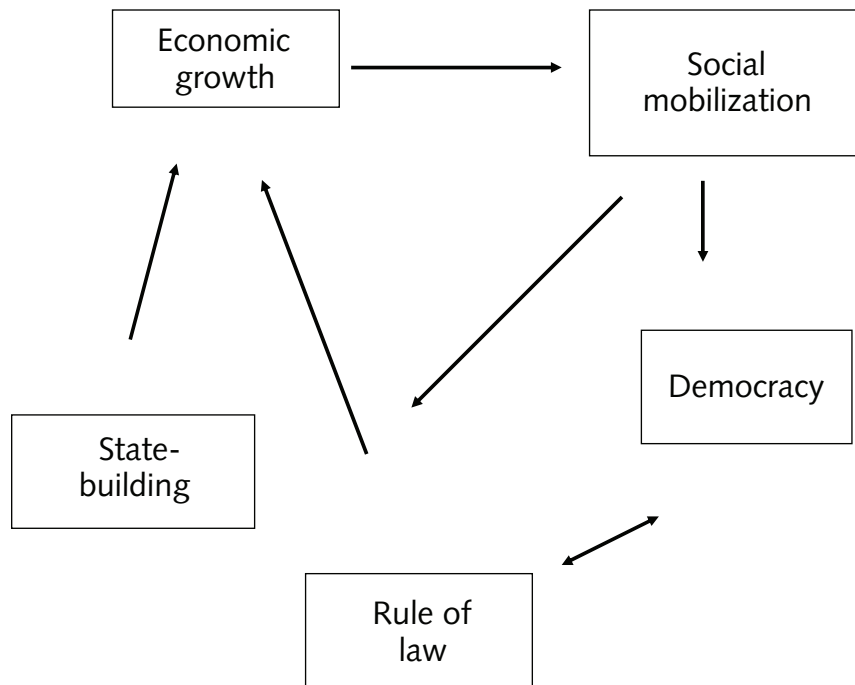
23. The World Bank recently reduced its estimate of China’s per capita GDP in PPP terms from more than \$6,000 to around \$4,000 (see <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/ICPEXT/0,,menuPK:1973757~pagePK:62002243~piPK:62002387~theSitePK:270065,00.html>). This puts it at a lower level of development than Taiwan and South Korea in the late 1980s and only half way to the \$8,000 threshold. A doubling of China’s current per capita income would presumably mean a substantial reduction of its agricultural sector and poverty more generally, which might alleviate pressures for redistribution under a more democratic political system.

24. Michael Reid, *Forgotten Continent: The Battle for Latin America’s Soul* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2007).

Implications for American Policy

Figure 4.1 lays out the four other dimensions of development that could be emphasized in place of or complementary to democracy assistance. They are: (1) economic development, (2) governance reform, (3) civil society promotion, and (4) rule of law reform. What are the implications of the complex relationships described above for the way that democracy assistance ought to be integrated with other aspects of development?

Figure 4.1. Five Dimensions of Development



This section will argue that the other dimensions of development are most critical not as precludes to or consequences of democratic transitions, but *after* democratic breakthroughs have occurred, where the goal is to consolidate democracy and to prevent backsliding. Democracy promotion needs to be embedded in a better set of capabilities to help new democracies deliver on promises of good governance, political inclusiveness, and shared economic growth. We cannot take democratic gains for granted, even after decades of stability. Venezuela and Colombia in the 1990s were two of the longest-standing democracies in Latin America, having experienced transitions in the late 1950s. And yet the first suffered coups and then populist regression under Hugo Chavez, while the latter struggled with guerillas and narcotraffickers that threatened to undermine key democratic institutions.

Seeing democracy assistance not as a stand-alone activity, but as part of a broader program of support for development has been a much more common perspective among Europeans than for Americans. Europeans are much more likely to see development as an end in itself, promoted by rich countries out of a sense of *noblesse oblige* rather than part of a security strategy. Although a new democratic administration is more likely to see development in a similar manner, the kinds of arguments used to justify development assistance to American publics will likely continue to

diverge from those that work for Europeans. Americans are much more likely to see democracy and good governance as conditions for economic development, while Europeans would stress economic growth as a facilitating condition for democratization.

Sequencing

It is important in the first instance to note that it is not up to the United States or other foreign actors to establish development strategies for other countries, or to think that it has the power to promote, for example, economic development ahead of political democratization (or the reverse). These decisions are taken by national elites or are sometimes forced on those elites by newly mobilized social groups, but by and large the timing and pace of major changes cannot be affected except at the margin by outside democracy assistance.

At that margin, however, the United States can decide to allocate its assistance resources to different types of development programs, choosing to play down one or focus on another. Washington can dispense policy advice, use diplomatic and economic pressure, and provide incentives through various types of conditionality. Moreover, appearances count: even if U.S. programs and initiatives do not create conditions for democratic advance, they can be perceived by local publics as helpful or harmful depending on context. Thus, democracy-building efforts in Iraq after the 2003 invasion were largely dismissed as hypocritical and self-interested by many Arabs, while the humanitarian assistance rendered to Pakistan and Indonesia after major natural disasters was much more effective in building good will.

Let us begin by considering how we should regard the place of economic development in a democracy promotion strategy. It should be clear that the “authoritarian transition” is not, as some foreign policy realists maintain, a good general approach to the development problem. The number of liberal and/or developmentally minded authoritarians is small and geographically limited for the most part to East Asian states.²⁵ Elsewhere in the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America, few countries have had consistently high-quality authoritarian leadership. It can be argued that such leadership exists in some of the sheikhdoms in the Persian Gulf like Qatar and the UAE; where this appears to be the case and where there is no obvious grassroots democratic movement, leaving well enough alone may be the more prudent policy on the part of the United States. It is worthwhile remembering, however, that erstwhile developmental champions like Museveni and Zenawi have proven in the long run to regress to the mean of African rather than East Asian authoritarian leaders.

Sequencing economic development prior to democracy makes more sense in countries like Singapore and China that are led by competent, pro-developmental governments. Here again the question is not whether the United States should somehow “choose” on their behalf what strategy to follow. If a powerful pro-democracy movement arises in a country deemed “unready” for democracy by some theoretical criterion, it is hardly up to the United States to delay or block it. In the absence of such an indigenous push for democracy, the more mundane decision concerns how much political capital Washington should invest in promoting human rights and pro-democracy

25. In retrospect, it might have been a good thing that the United States did not push either Taiwan or South Korea to open up their political systems too early (e.g., in the 1950s or 1960s) before they had become industrialized societies. And it is not clear that a collapse of the Chinese authoritarian system is desirable or would lead to stable democracy there.

groups. The general choice that virtually all previous U.S. administrations has made is to try to protect the human rights of specific groups and individuals, but not to condition the broader bilateral relationship on specific performance benchmarks. Given how much is at stake in these relationships, it is hard to advocate a different outcome. In such cases we have perhaps consoled ourselves that we were following a sequencing strategy. But it is probably best not to confuse ourselves in this fashion and admit that we are not sequencing, but rather giving a higher priority to other important national interests over democracy.

Economic Development as a Complement to Democratic Transition

Although economic development can be seen as a prelude to democratic transition, it is perhaps more important for U.S. policy to pay attention to growth as a *complement* to democracy assistance in countries that have already made a transition, since higher levels of development clearly do make it easier to sustain democratic institutions. The United States has indeed followed this logic in many places, promoting free trade agreements as a means of increasing rates of economic growth on the part of democratic allies. Democracy in Colombia has been threatened internally by narco-traffickers and guerrilla groups like the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) and externally by populist rivals like Venezuela and Bolivia. The free trade agreement negotiated by the Bush administration with Bogota makes excellent sense as a means of consolidating that country's security gains. Free trade agreements have become very controversial within the United States because of their alleged consequences for American workers, but their foreign policy benefits are great, and their use as a foreign policy instrument should be continued.

In addition to economic growth, the United States could pay much more attention to the distribution of that growth, and the way that governments it supports deliver social services to the poorer and more vulnerable parts of their populations. One of the oldest arguments in democratic theory concerns the degree to which the formal equality offered by liberal democracies needs to be supplemented by substantive social equality in terms of income distribution, access to social services, and ability to participate in public life. Obviously, any free society with a prosperous market economy will have to tolerate some degree of inequality. Achieving the degree of social equality to which Communism aspired requires dictatorial control over individual choices. But there is wide variance in the starting degree of income inequality among liberal democracies and also in the degree to which they redistribute income and invest in equalizing policies like universal education to correct these differences.

Many observers have pointed out, for example, that the economic success of East Asian fast developers like Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan was abetted by the American-sponsored land reform efforts made in the aftermath of World War II as well as heavy investments made by all of these societies in universal education thereafter. Relatively equal income distribution meant that the benefits of growth could be broadly shared among the population as a whole, leading to rather peaceful transitions to democracy in the Korean and Taiwanese cases. The situation is much different in Latin America, by contrast, where high levels of inequality inherited from colonial times have persisted with remarkable durability over the centuries. As a result, any given Latin American society is capable of economic growth for periods as long as a generation, but that growth is almost inevitably interrupted by the emergence of social conflicts and a "fight for shares" arising

from growth's unequally distributed benefits. The rise of populism in Andean countries like Venezuela, Ecuador, and Bolivia is due in large part to the belief shared by many of the poor that democracy was dominated by oligarchic elites who designed policies to suit their own class interests.²⁶

The same is true in other parts of the world. Islamist groups like Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza and leaders like Mahmoud Ahmedinejad in Iran have received substantial support for their active funding of social programs that provide services to the poor. Part of the reason that parents send their children to madrasas in Pakistan and Indonesia is that governments have failed in providing decent-quality secular education through the public school system. Thus the long-term stability of democracy as well as influence in the struggle over hearts and minds depends in large measure on the ability of democratic countries to mitigate to some extent its unequal distribution of income and wealth.

The United States is obviously not in a position to solve the deeply embedded problems of poverty and inequality in developing countries. It is not in a position to outbid local leaders who seek to provide social services to their constituents. Nor would it be desirable for the United States to advocate a return to one form of the old social democratic agenda that entailed ever-increasing social spending and labor market regulation. But it is also very difficult to compete politically with populist leaders if the United States and its local democratic allies have nothing to offer in the social arena. At a minimum, it is important for U.S. leaders to acknowledge the problems of poverty and marginalization when speaking about developing countries.

Part of the problem is that social policy has not been of interest to most policymakers, and especially those concerned with international affairs, for at least the past generation. Since the conservative Reagan-Thatcher revolutions of the 1980s and 1990s, the thrust of a lot of public policy has been, to repeat, to cut back on social spending and welfare states. Many economists would argue that the best way to fight poverty is through rapid economic growth rather than through targeted social programs. In this, they are right: fast-growing countries like China and Vietnam have reduced poverty dramatically through sustained growth. But many countries are simply not going to be able to achieve growth rates like the high performers in East Asia and meantime face serious political demands for more direct approaches to poverty. And in this realm, there has been relatively little new thinking on how to do social policy better—that is, how to deliver basic social services like education and health care in an equitable fashion but also in ways that do not bust budgets, create dependence and expanding entitlements, and return countries to conditions of permanent fiscal crisis.

There are, fortunately, new ideas out there that have some hope of addressing problems of poverty in ways compatible with economic growth. Back in the 1990s, for example, Mexico began a conditional cash transfer (CCT) program called *Progresa* under which low-income families would receive a direct stipend on the condition that they either send their school-age children to school or, if they were pregnant mothers, receive prenatal care. The program was carefully designed by a group of economists and had built into it facilities for statistically measuring the impact of CCTs. The program, which proved both successful and popular, was greatly expanded under President Fox under the title *Oportunidades*. Since then, CCTs have been widely copied throughout Latin America and other parts of the developing world. The largest by far is the *Bolsa Familia* in Brazil, which today reaches some 15 million poor Brazilians and by some accounts has had a measurable effect in lowering Brazil's notoriously high gini coefficient.

26. Francis Fukuyama, "The Latin American Experience," *Journal of Democracy* 19, no. 4 (2008): 69–79.

The second alternative entry point for development lies in better, more capable states and governance reform. Governance refers to the ability of states to deliver necessary public goods and services to their citizens in a transparent and effective way. There are unfortunately too many developing country governments that are weak, corrupt, and prone to patronage rather than universal forms of public goods delivery.

Delivering on Good Governance

As noted in the previous section, there is a large literature linking good governance to economic growth, so improved governance is an alternative to trade for promoting economic development. But good governance is directly related to democratic stability because its opposite does much to undermine the legitimacy of democratic institutions. Scott Mainwaring suggests, for example, that Evo Morales' rise in Bolivia was facilitated less by social exclusion *per se*—rates of school attendance and voting had risen dramatically in the prior few decades—than by weak service delivery to poor constituencies throughout Bolivia on the part of democratically elected governments.²⁷

Good governance entails not just fighting public corruption, but also making basic public services like education, health, public safety, and the courts work more efficiently. In most countries, public services work reasonably well for elites and sometimes for the middle classes. To the extent that effort is put into increasing the effectiveness of service delivery for poor people as well, the governance agenda overlaps with the economic distribution agenda discussed in the previous section.

Multilateral financial institutions like the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank have devoted a great deal of effort in recent years to programs aimed at improving governance. These consist of reform efforts targeted at particular ministries (finance, police, etc.), broad civil service reform, anticorruption initiatives, tax and procurement reform, and the like. Overall, outside of the narrow area of public financial management, these reform projects have been on the whole disappointing.²⁸ There are a number of reasons for this, including the poor match between the desired “good” institutions and the underlying society as well as the fact that dysfunctional or corrupt institutions are deeply rooted politically. Outside donors often times lack both the wisdom and the political leverage to reform weak institutions. This has been the case even in countries like Iraq where the United States has exercised (for brief periods) sovereign powers and occupied the country with its own troops.

The most important strategies devised by development agencies to improve service delivery in developing countries are (1) conditionality; (2) shortening accountability routes; and (3) direct service provision. Each is briefly discussed below.

Conditionality

Multilateral development agencies like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund have by now developed substantial experience trying to use conditionality in lending as a means of forcing policy reform in developing countries, usually in conjunction with the structural adjustment

27. Scott Mainwaring, “The Crisis of Representation in the Andes,” *Journal of Democracy* 17, no. 3 (2006): 13–27.

28. World Bank, *Public Sector Reform: What Works and Why?* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2008).

lending attempted in the 1980s and 1990s. The policy record on this front is very mixed. Although conditionality did in fact produce changes in macroeconomic policy in certain cases (particularly in the big Latin American countries after the 1980s debt crisis), it failed to produce the desired reform in many poor African states. Deeper institutional reforms (such as restructuring a civil service), moreover, were much harder to force than policy reforms like cutting subsidies or privatizing state industries.

The most successful use of conditionality was perhaps the European Union's accession process, which created substantial incentives for countries in Eastern Europe to engage in far-ranging institutional as well as policy reforms. The reason why the EU accession process was more effective than structural adjustment lending by the international financial institutions reveals a lot about the conditions under which any form of conditionality will be effective.

Effective conditionality depends on at least three factors: first, the size of the incentive; second, the clarity and objectivity of the performance standards; and third, the backloading of the incentives. Most donor-funded aid programs seeking to incentivize governance reform fail in all three areas. First, few donors are able to offer incentives remotely comparable to the benefits conferred by EU accession, which involves both trade access and substantial subsidies. Second, donor conditions are often both excessively detailed, long, and malleable; the donors themselves are often complicit in fudging the standards to make themselves look good. And finally, the taxpayers standing behind donors want to move aid money out the door and measure their own success not by actual outcomes but by how much aid has been disbursed; the backloading of aid slows down this process.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) was designed in many ways to overcome these flaws. It employs state-of-the-art governance measures; it makes good governance a condition for signing a compact; and at least initially it was supposed to have been very generously funded. Its problems lie more in execution than in design. Congress never appropriated more than a fraction of the money initially promised and has pressured the agency to sign compacts prematurely on the basis of foreign policy rather than governance criteria. Nonetheless, the MCC is structured to make better use of conditionality than most conventional donor agencies.

Short-route Accountability

The World Bank distinguishes between long-route and short-route accountability as a way of understanding governance failures in developing countries.²⁹ In democratic countries, governments are supposed to be accountable to the citizens they serve, and institutions like elections and parliaments are established to underpin this accountability. Yet in many democracies, these forms of “long-route” accountability fail. India, for example, has been a stable democracy almost uninterrupted since its independence in 1947, and yet in many Indian states, the quality of education and health services provided by democratically elected state governments is abysmal. There are numerous reasons why long-route accountability fails, including poor information about the performance both of service delivery organizations and the politicians directing them; collective action failures on the part of clients and citizens; and the “lumpiness” of electoral politics, in which politicians run on a host of platforms only some of which are related to service delivery performance.

29. For an overview, see World Bank, *World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2004).

One solution to this problem is to shorten the accountability routes. For example, a local politician directly elected to a school board is more likely to be responsive to parent complaints about poor education than a distant parliamentarian representing a very large district. In either case, detailed information on service performance is critical in mobilizing citizen demands for better governance.

Development agencies have been experimenting with a variety of techniques to improve short-route accountability. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to review this experience; it is, nonetheless, a domain where traditional democracy promotion can play an important role as it simply seeks to target democratic accountability on specific public services.

Direct Provision of Services

In some cases, the performance of indigenous governments is so bad that outside donors have sought to bypass them altogether. This has been done by the so-called vertical funds dispensing HIV/AIDS relief and by community-driven development (CDD) projects. In the latter case, donors like the World Bank seek to bypass local governments altogether and inject funds directly at a village level. This requires a labor-intensive process of social engineering, since village-level communities have to be organized to enable them to make equitable decisions about the use of funds and involved in the actual implementation of projects.

CDD is often controversial because it is seen as providing a parallel service delivery track that can undermine and delegitimize the existing government structure. Under ideal circumstances, CDD projects provide competition for local governments and incentivize them to improve their own performance. But in other cases, CDD locks donors into long-term service delivery commitments whose mechanisms will not survive the end of outside resources.

Mobilization of Civil Society

The third alternative entry point for development—promotion of social mobilization and civil society—is something that has in fact been done consistently by the international democracy promotion community for many years. But there are new players in this field. As a result of disappointment with top-down efforts to promote good governance, traditional development agencies have turned to bottom-up approaches that overlap or converge with civil society promotion programs long fostered under the heading of democracy promotion. These two groups have sought to deliver technical assistance and resources directly to grassroots organizations, but with differing motives: the development agencies sought to strengthen community-level democracy as a means of bypassing (initially) corrupt local government, and then as a means of building “voice” and pressure on those governments to improve their performance. The democracy promotion community, for its part, has pursued similar policies for the sake of encouraging political participation as an end in itself. A common agenda is now emerging between the economic and political development communities, which in the past have not worked closely with one another.

The major policy issues in the realm of civil society promotion have to do with its limits. Many newly mobilized social groups around the world are seen as hostile to U.S. foreign policy interests. This is a familiar problem in the Middle East, where many of the most active civil society groups are Islamist. Most of these organizations are banned from receiving American assistance

on account of their real or purported links to terrorism. Similarly in Latin America, groups like the cocoa growers association once headed by Evo Morales have been seen as destabilizing and problematic with regard to U.S. antidrug policy.

Rule of Law Reform

The final entry point for development is promotion of rule of law. As noted above, Fareed Zakaria has argued that rule of law is more important to economic development and should be promoted prior to democracy. As many of his critics have noted, however, it is very difficult to separate rule of law from democracy in the contemporary world.³⁰ The number of on-the-ground social groups who want the former without the latter tends to very small, often restricted, when it exists at all, to the business community. Conversely, there are relatively few authoritarian rulers who are willing to respect the rule of law but who are not willing to permit broader political participation, in the manner of the nineteenth century German *Rechtstaat*.

A second problem with rule-of-law promotion is that it is inherently much harder to achieve than democracy promotion. Foreign donors have been promoting rule of law around the world for close to two decades now, with rather ambiguous results.³¹ Foreign donors have tended to focus on the most technical and easily measurable dimensions of legal reform without changing the complex incentive structure facing judges and lawyers. Police reform is doubly problematic because it often embroils donors in the training of weak police organizations that go on to commit human rights abuses. Full-blown legal reform is also quite expensive, requiring a generation-long investment in the training of legal professionals at various levels, and is something that often has to await higher levels of economic development. For this reason, a number of observers have suggested that second- or third-best outcomes (such as the retention of customary law for dealing with a certain class of disputes) may be necessary in poor societies.

This means that democratic breakthroughs should not be seen as an occasion to relax, but rather to broaden the assistance agenda to include economic, governance, rule-of-law, and policy initiatives as a follow-up. The particular mixture of policies will obviously have to be tailored to the circumstances of specific countries. One critical new part of this agenda will be to work with democratic parties and governments to develop policy agendas that will increase their legitimacy and appeal to the broadest coalitions of supporters possible. Here, innovative and improved governance and pro-poor policies will be critical.

Implementation Issues

One of the biggest problems with trying to embed democracy promotion in a broader development agenda is that of coordination, given the fragmented manner in which development assistance is delivered in the U.S. government today. Even within the realm of democracy assistance, it is very hard to understand the full scope of the programs offered by the U.S. government today. (Indeed, the so-called F process within the State Department was initiated in the second term of the Bush administration because Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice could not get a straight answer to the question of how much the United States was spending on democracy assistance.) Many

30. Plattner, “From Liberalism to Illiberal Democracy,” 121–134; Thomas Carothers, *Promoting the Rule of Law Abroad: In Search of Knowledge* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment, 2006).

31. Carothers, *Promoting the Rule of Law Abroad*.

reform proposals being promoted during this time of presidential transition will bear directly on how the United States delivers democracy assistance.³² If the latter is to be embedded in a broader strategy that promotes other dimensions of development, the institutional structure within which it operates will be critical.

Most of the proposals for reforming the way that the United States delivers development assistance, including democracy assistance, are premised on the need for greater coordination of the disparate aid initiatives currently administered by the U.S. government. Existing proposals focus both on the organization of top-level agencies charged with administering assistance as well as with the ground-level question of the recruitment, training, and long-term career paths of officials working in this area.

Choices in either area will be critically dependent on one central issue—the level at which development assistance of all sorts is to be integrated with U.S. foreign policy. One model is the one that animated the F process, which sought to centralize control over development and subordinate it to the secretary of state. Because development and security go hand-in-hand in the war on terrorism, there needs also to be low-level coordination of civilian and military operations, with civilian and military officials readily able to work with one another. (A prominent example of this, implemented with mixed success in Iraq and Afghanistan, is the Provincial Reconstruction Team, or PRT.)

There are obvious reasons for pursuing a ground-up integration of development with U.S. foreign policy and national security. Congress, after all, appropriates money for foreign assistance to advance the foreign policy goals of the United States and not as a freestanding activity. Nation-building activities in Iraq and Afghanistan have been plagued with disputes between the Pentagon, the State Department, and the other civilian agencies charged with promoting different aspects of development. For this reason the Project on National Security Reform has recommended applying a Goldwater-Nichols model to the civilian side of the foreign policy establishment, creating career incentives for officials to work “jointly” outside of their own agencies.

On the other hand, there are also good reasons for creating a parallel but separate development assistance structure that would be coordinated with other aspects of U.S. foreign policy only at the level of the Cabinet and White House. The model here, recommended by the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network, or MFAN, is to create a freestanding Department of Development, modeled on the UK Department for International Development, that would report directly to the president and would have its own cabinet-level secretary.

There are two rationales for an independent structure. The first is that the tight subordination of development assistance to U.S. foreign policy undermines the effectiveness of the aid programs by linking them to self-interested objectives. On the democracy assistance front, the Bush administration accentuated this tendency by arguing that democracy assistance would be the primary instrument of a broad U.S. national security strategy in the war on terrorism. Hence many people in the Middle East and former Soviet space dismiss democracy promotion simply as a weapon used by Washington to advance its interests. An independent development department, while still serving U.S. foreign policy interests, might be seen as having goals broader than that. This is the same rationale underlying the creation of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) as an organi-

32. Two current efforts include the Project on National Security Reform, or PNSR (see <http://www.pnsr.org/web/module/blog/interior.asp>), initiated by the Pentagon, and the Modernizing Foreign Assistance Network, or MFAN, an initiative of the development community (see http://www.cgdev.org/section/initiatives/_active/assistance).

zation separate from the Democracy and Governance branch of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Although both are funded by U.S. taxpayers, the NED is perceived by many to be more independent than USAID. It also has more freedom of action in dispensing its budget than USAID.

The second rationale for an independent department is that the kinds of expertise and personnel needed to promote development are quite different from those appropriate to foreign policy/security. Many people are attracted to development as a profession out of a commitment to universal values and not because they see it as key to advancing American national interests. Foreign service officers, by contrast, see their core responsibility as representing the interests of the United States. When they wander into the job of dispensing grants to civil society organizations or managing health programs, they end up confusing themselves and their target audiences.

Apart from the issue of how to integrate development into broader U.S. foreign policy, there is also the question of how to coordinate the different dimensions of development. The discussion above underlines how interrelated these dimensions of development are, and yet in the field they tend to be implemented in watertight compartments. Should coordination be done by a country team, at the level of the region, or on a global basis in Washington? Or would greater effort to coordinate activities deter innovation and add layers of bureaucracy?

The following examples illustrate the need for better low-level coordination within the practice of development assistance. The two party institutes funded by USAID and the NED—the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute—have a core mission of supporting the development of like-minded political parties around the world. This has for the most part focused on organizational issues like training, recruitment, and organizing election campaigns. The institutes have spent much less time helping political parties develop substantive policy platforms involving, say, governance reforms or antipoverty programs, either before or after they come to power. And yet, having programs that appeal to important constituencies will be critical to their future survival and to the legitimacy of the political system as a whole.

Another example concerns community-driven development or CDD, noted above, on which the World Bank and other development agencies now spend hundreds of millions of dollars. CDD programs are innovative programs that seek to inject development assistance directly at the village level, bypassing corrupt or ineffective local governments and encouraging the organization of local communities into inclusive decisionmaking bodies. CDD programs try, in other words, to promote grassroots civil society not for the sake of political participation as an end in itself, but as an adjunct to economic development. And yet the democracy promotion community that has long supported civil society development has virtually nothing to do with programs.

Any discussion of how to embed democracy promotion into a broader development strategy will remain purely theoretical unless one can propose concrete institutional changes that will force people on the ground to think and act in these broader terms. My own ideal choice would be to create an independent Department of Development that would include democracy assistance as one of its core functions. If this new department adopted a matrix-style organization, it could recruit professionals based on expertise and function and integrate them into teams at a country level. Key to the success of such a restructuring, however, would be the creation of a new, professional development career track that would restore pride and *esprit de corps* to this line of work. This would entail substantial increases in core funding for development, so that many of the functions now outsourced to contractors could again be done in-house. And it would require elimi-

nating some of the current congressionally mandated constraints on the way that development officials are allowed to operate.

Conclusions

For intrinsic and practical reasons, democracy assistance should not be considered an activity isolated from the other dimensions of development. The development of accountable political institutions is both an end in itself and a means toward better governance, economic growth, and social development. Sustainable democracy depends in turn on economic growth, legitimacy born of effective government, social inclusion, and programs designed to mitigate class, ethnic, and racial inequalities.

U.S. foreign policy has tended to compartmentalize these different dimensions of development, assigning them to separate agencies and keeping all of them separate from military strategy. Functional specialization is indeed important—people who are good at monitoring elections are usually not good at setting up health clinics, much less killing or capturing insurgents. But all of these activities ought to be related to one another at the level of U.S. national strategy.

An understanding that development has economic, social, and state-building dimensions in addition to democracy and the rule of law might suggest to some a sequencing strategy in which democracy is relegated to a later stage of development. That is emphatically not the bottom line of the analysis presented here. The point is rather that initial democratic breakthroughs have not been consolidated by efforts to deliver on the promise of equal access and participation that democracy seemed to offer. Part of the reversal of democratic gains that have occurred in the first decade of the twenty-first century have come about because new democratic regimes have remained ensnared in corruption, unable to deliver services, or have proven unable to extend genuine participation to the poor or marginalized populations.

Even when a democratic breakthrough has not occurred, the ability of democratic political parties to win elections or otherwise come to power oftentimes depends on whether they have a social agenda that promises to deliver services to populations. In many semi-democracies or competitive authoritarian regimes today, political actors with authoritarian instincts from Hugo Chavez and Daniel Ortega to Hamas and Hezbollah have ridden to power based on their perceived ability to respond to popular dissatisfaction over the ability of existing governments to provide basic services. Indeed, many of these actors are in the business of providing these services directly.

We label this kind of politics “populism,” but it is important to be clear about why populism is a bad thing. The problem with populist policies is not that they respond to popular political demands, because that is what democracy is about in the first place. The problem is rather that populists initiate policies that are either unsustainable or else satisfy short-term demands at the expense of long-term viability. In addition, many populists target their social programs only at political supporters in a clientilistic way, rather than making them universally available. Truly democratic political groups, by contrast, need to respond to pressures for services and good governance by creating universal programs that can be sustained fiscally over the long run.

So although democracy assistance ought to preserve its functional specialization in political development, the activity as a whole needs to be incorporated into a much larger national strategy to win support for American purposes around the world. The U.S. government, in turn, needs to

improve its capacity to deliver on the different dimensions of development as well as find appropriate ways of coordinating them, both on the ground and at a strategic level. Only in this way will the United States be able to meet the new conditions of struggle between democratic and antidemocratic forces around the world.

5

ENGAGING AUTOCRATS (AND DEMOCRATS) TO FACILITATE DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS

Michael McFaul

After fighting two wars in the name of democratic regime change during the Bush administration, most Americans associate democracy promotion with coercive action. Because autocratic regimes govern by immoral means, so the logic goes, they must be coerced into changing or forced out of power. Many human rights organizations and democracy promotion organizations also advocate punishment as a response to abusive or undemocratic behavior by autocratic regimes. These organizations usually refrain from recommending military force against bad regimes, but they almost always call for economic sanctions or diplomatic demarches against autocratic government. These kinds of coercive policies rarely result in democratic regime change, but they do allow American governments and nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs, to feel like they are doing something in reaction to autocratic behavior.

Conversely, self-described “realists” advocate engagement of autocratic regimes especially when they perform specific tasks that serve American national interests such as exporting energy, providing military bases, fighting terrorists, or helping to contain even more belligerent authoritarian regimes. Realists also prefer, though not always, to engage with enemy regimes (which by definition, are also autocratic, as democratic regimes are never enemies of the United States), believing that dialogue and cooperation can help to preserve the existing balance of power, which since the end of World War II has usually favored the United States. Proponents of realist ideology purposively want to leave issues of democracy or human rights out of negotiations with autocratic regimes, friendly or otherwise, believing that such talk only gets in the way of achieving more important foreign policy goals.

Between these two extremes is a third way—pursuing engagement with autocratic regimes as a strategy for promoting democratic change. Many specific conditions are necessary for this strategy to succeed. Most important, the American president and top diplomatic officials must consciously define democratization as a goal of engagement. Otherwise, the targeted regime and the American diplomats executing the engagement policy can interpret the goal of the strategy as “stable” relations and nothing more. Obviously, the overwhelming majority of cases of U.S. engagement of autocratic regimes has not fostered democratic change and in many cases has stymied it.

Second, and related to the first condition, the highest levels of American government must be involved in these efforts. This kind of strategy for democracy promotion cannot succeed if assigned to lower-level diplomats.

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Third, historically, this strategy has worked best when the engaged regime is friendly to the United States and is especially potent when targeted at autocracies that rely on the United States for legitimacy, arms transfers, economic assistance, and even security guarantees. Nonetheless, some successful cases of engagement of hostile autocratic regimes during the Cold War—including the granddaddy of them all, the USSR—suggest that close relations with the United States is not a necessary condition for this strategy to succeed.

Fourth, this strategy has worked most effectively when the U.S. government and American NGOs have sought to engage and at times support in parallel the democratic forces inside the targeted autocratic regime. This second track is needed not only to keep the pressure on the autocrats but also to make sure that the democratic opposition understands and supports the U.S. strategy.

One should not exaggerate the past success or future potential of this strategy. But a better understanding of some critical cases during the Cold War can help to identify conditions under which this strategy might be deployed to encourage democratic change in friendly autocratic regimes such as Morocco, Jordan, or Malaysia, or more anti-American dictatorships in Iran, Cuba, and possibly North Korea. Space limitations do not allow an examination of all successful cases, and a discussion of all failed cases would take hundreds of pages. Instead, this chapter discusses in depth a small handful of successful cases in recent American history that might offer some lessons for practicing this strategy of democratic change in the future.

The first section examines three successful cases of engagement of friendly autocratic regimes in the 1980s—the Philippines, South Korea, and Chile. The second section discusses the very rare case when a combination of coercion and engagement were deployed to successfully encourage democratic change in an American ally—South Africa. The third section examines how strategically timed engagement of Communist foes helped to facilitate democratization in the Soviet Union and Poland. And the concluding section offers some speculations about current cases.

Engaging Autocratic Allies: Success in the Philippines, South Korea, and Chile

Ronald Reagan may have been the most successful president in the twentieth century in using diplomacy with friendly autocrats to achieve democratic change. Reagan's record is ironic in that he initially focused on undermining Communist regimes hostile to the United States. He was never embarrassed by his close ties with odious autocrats in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. On the contrary, Reagan initially embraced the arguments of his ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick. In her famous article, "Dictatorships and Double Standards," Kirkpatrick argued that withdrawing U.S. support for friendly dictatorships was not simply bad strategy, but also morally wrong.¹ According to Kirkpatrick, the revolutions in Iran and Nicaragua not only deprived the United States of loyal allies, but also resulted in the replacement of moderately repressive regimes with devastatingly abusive successors. Autocrats ruling in capitalist countries could make the transition to democracy gradually, but Communist dictatorships could not. Her framework provided compelling justification for supporting pro-American autocrats, which Reagan continued to do for most of his time in office.

1. Jeane Kirkpatrick, *Dictatorship and Double Standards: Rationalism and Reason in Politics* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982).

Reagan, however, also firmly believed in promoting freedom around the world. His June 1982 speech to the British parliament reflected his genuine views and was not mere camouflage for his government's support for repressive regimes in South Korea, El Salvador, South Africa, the Philippines, Indonesia, and most of the Middle East.² Especially after George Shultz became secretary of state in 1982, these competing ideas about the purpose of American power created real divides and tensions within the Reagan administration. Under Shultz's leadership, the State Department began to practice dual-track diplomacy: continuing to maintain state-to-state relations with autocratic U.S. allies, while in parallel also pushing for democratic change when opportunities arose.³ Reagan and his foreign policy team were more focused on promoting democracy in some friendly dictatorships than in others. Despite public demands to get tough with the apartheid regime in South Africa, Reagan did little more than restate his objections to racism. Authoritarian regimes in Egypt, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and Taiwan never became a target of official criticism.

But for a handful of U.S. allies, including the Philippines, South Korea, and Chile, this new approach to diplomacy helped at the margins to produce rather unexpected, radical, and positive changes for those committed to democracy.⁴ In all three of the cases, the central driver of democratic change was the growing strength of local democratic movements, not U.S. diplomats. At the same time, by constraining the unacceptable behavior of incumbent autocrats, encouraging emerging democratic forces, and recognizing the positive relationship between democracy promotion and national security, U.S. government officials helped to push the process of democratization forward in all three cases. And contrary to the predictions of the Kirkpatrick doctrine, these transitions did not bring Marxist radicals to power, increase regional instability, or disrupt relations with the United States.⁵

The Philippines

By the time Reagan delivered his historic speech at Westminster in June 1982, Filipino autocrat Ferdinand Marcos had already planned a trip to the United States.⁶ The Reagans had become close to Marcos and his wife, Imelda, in the late 1960s after visiting Manila on behalf of the Nixon administration. Consequently, Reagan was extremely hesitant to confront Marcos about his execrable record on human rights and indefinite suspension of democracy. Nonetheless, Reagan's

2. During Reagan's first year in office, heightened exposure of the brutal human rights violations in which the Salvadoran armed forces indulged in the name of anti-Communism put intense pressure on the U.S. administration to cut off all military aid to the Salvadoran junta. Refusing to admit either the extent or the brutality of such violations, State Department officials instead pointed to the junta's commitment to hold elections in March 1982 as evidence of its goodwill. Salvadoran voters' stunning enthusiasm on election day altered the U.S. government's perceptions. Whenever confronted with demands to cut off aid to the Salvadoran armed forces, Washington could argue that El Salvador was a nascent democratic friend that the United States must not abandon.

3. This theme is developed throughout George Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph: Diplomacy, Power, and the Victory of the American Ideal* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993).

4. David Adesnik and Michael McFaul, "Engaging Autocratic Allies to Promote Democracy," *The Washington Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 7–26.

5. The argument that democratizing countries are more likely to fight wars is made in Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, *Electing to Fight: Why Emerging Democracies Go to War* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005).

6. For a well-researched and well-written account of U.S.-Filipino relations and the Filipino democratic revolution, see Sandra Burton, *Impossible Dream: The Marcoses, the Aquinos, and the Unfinished Revolution* (New York: Warner, 1989).

powerful rhetoric about democracy set the tone for his administration, empowering influential but lesser known officials such as Michael Armacost, Richard Armitage, and Paul Wolfowitz to begin an ambitious effort to help democratize American allies.⁷ Marcos became the first to learn that the United States expected more of its allies than mere anti-Communism.

In August 1983, Filipino opposition leader Benigno Aquino returned to Manila from exile in the United States, only to be gunned down at the airport by government security forces. Embarrassed by the incident, Reagan canceled his trip to Manila, which had been planned for later that fall. Severing ties completely with the Marcos dictatorship was not an option; the Philippines was home to the most important U.S. military installations in the Pacific theater—assets that both Democrats and Republicans acknowledged were integral to defending Asia from Communist expansion. Nonetheless, the mass protests that coincided with Aquino's death and funeral raised concerns that the people of the Philippines might remove Marcos from power and punish the United States for supporting him by revoking its basing rights.

According to the logic of the Kirkpatrick doctrine, the United States had to continue supporting Marcos to ensure that a radical regime would not take power in Manila. With a growing Maoist guerrilla force in the Filipino countryside, the prospect of a Communist takeover was more than hypothetical. It had happened before, in Nicaragua in 1979. After opposition leader Pedro Joaquín Chamorro was assassinated, relatively moderate protesters flooded the streets of the capital, later aligning with Communist guerrillas waiting in the countryside. Yet certain officials in the Reagan administration read the history of Nicaragua very differently. The Carter administration's great failure, they claimed, was not its hesitation to support the crumbling Somoza regime, but rather its hesitation to come to the aid of the moderate, pro-democratic opposition. As Carter wavered, Somoza stood fast, forcing the moderates into the radicals' arms and ensuring a Communist takeover after Somoza's inevitable departure.

Wolfowitz, then the assistant secretary of state for East Asia, argued that continued access to U.S. military bases depended on establishing a strong relationship with the people of the Philippines rather than with the government they despised. Governments may fall, he argued, but the people endure. Armacost, the U.S. ambassador to Manila, was committed to the same approach and helped implement Wolfowitz's strategy on the ground. The Pentagon's support was essential, and Armitage, then the assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, also endorsed this new approach. Although Reagan himself never displayed an interest in Filipino reform, his public support for democracy promotion provided his subordinates with a rhetorical umbrella.

The greater challenge was getting Marcos to submit to U.S. strategy. After all, why would a dictator be complicit in his own regime's destruction? Marcos had no choice but to allow partial liberalization in order to assuage the millions outraged by Aquino's murder. In addition, Marcos had constantly referred to the importance of democracy and freedom. The trick was to keep pushing Marcos just slightly further than he wanted to go, giving irreversible momentum to the process of reform.

The first major step was the 1984 parliamentary election. The elections did not threaten Marcos's hold on power; the legislature had no control over the executive branch. Moreover, Marcos

7. On ideas as focal points, see Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane, "Ideas and Foreign Policy: An Analytical Framework," in *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, ed. Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 3–30.

knew that his political machine could stuff every ballot box in the outlying regions of the Philippine archipelago. Not surprisingly, some members of the opposition wondered why it was worth competing in an election they were destined to lose. This approach was shortsighted, however, because it underestimated the importance of establishing incontrovertible evidence of just how popular the opposition was, even if that popularity would not translate immediately into the power to govern. Holding an election, regardless of the outcome, also provided opposition activists—who numbered more than 100,000—with the opportunity to learn the art of independent election monitoring.⁸ Despite their inexperience, poll watchers played an important role in the opposition's urban strongholds. With Marcos unwilling to use violence in the closely watched urban precincts because the United States was watching, the simple presence of opposition monitors dramatically reduced the opportunities for fraud. As a result, the opposition claimed no less than one-third of the seats in the new legislature and an even greater percentage of the overall vote, embarrassing the regime while also helping to marginalize the Maoist guerrillas and demonstrate the viability of nonviolent resistance.

In late 1985, in a nationally televised interview, Marcos announced that the next presidential election would be held earlier—just a few weeks into 1986—than the scheduled election in mid-1987. Caught off-guard, the opposition's internal divisions began to reveal themselves. With the strong support of the U.S. embassy, however, the opposition soon rallied behind Corazon “Cory” Aquino, widow of the slain opposition leader. Although she was not an impressive public speaker, Aquino's pious humility inspired wild enthusiasm among the country's voters.

Marcos had to face down an army of election monitors numbering almost half a million. An American nongovernmental organization, the National Democratic Institution (NDI), had developed a close relationship with the National Citizen's Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL), a domestic election-monitoring organization, well before the Reagan administration reversed its support for Marcos. With NDI's assistance, NAMFREL developed the capacity to expose massive electoral fraud by the government. Among the observers was a U.S. delegation led by Senator John Kerry and Senator Richard Lugar. Journalists from the United States also arrived by the dozens to report on the election. The presence of so many Americans played a critical role in shaping perceptions in the United States, where reports of massive fraud might otherwise have been discounted. As expected, Marcos declared himself the winner by a landslide.

Reagan's reaction was of paramount concern to Filipinos, because Marcos often dismissed pressure from mid-level U.S. officials as nothing more than a State Department conspiracy. To ensure that Reagan came down on the right side, Lugar personally briefed the president on the extent of Marcos's cheating. Yet, to the shock and dismay of both Aquino's supporters and her friends in the United States, Reagan incorrectly claimed at a press conference that both sides may have been responsible for the fraud. The backlash was intense and immediate; within four days Reagan retracted his statement, admitting that Marcos alone was responsible for the fraud. Ironically, Reagan's own inspirational speeches about freedom were partially responsible for the widespread insistence that the United States had a moral obligation to support Aquino and resist Marcos. Reagan was held accountable to his own rhetoric. The damage had been done, however, and Marcos interpreted Reagan's wavering stance as an indication that the White House would not shift its support to the opposition.

8. Eric Bjornlund, *Beyond Free and Fair: Monitoring Elections and Building Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), chapter 10.

In what became known as “People Power,” the streets of Manila filled with hundreds of thousands and then millions of protesters demanding that Marcos step down. The Philippine government had already begun to splinter, with Marcos’s defense minister and chief of staff defecting to the opposition. The dictator considered crushing the protests with loyal military units, and even dispatched an armored force to the scene of the largest protests, but recoiled from the mass slaughter that would be necessary to restore his authority. With hundreds of U.S. journalists now reporting daily from Manila, the murder of innocents might have cost Marcos U.S. support once and for all. Nonetheless, Marcos held on until Reagan’s closest advisers finally decided that he had to go. Because Reagan refused to give the order himself, his close friend, Senator Paul Laxalt, telephoned Marcos to render the verdict. Shortly thereafter, U.S. military helicopters evacuated Marcos from the presidential palace; later, a U.S. air force jet took him into exile in Hawaii.

Across the political spectrum, the American public was elated by Aquino’s triumph. American support for democratization in the Philippines did not threaten U.S. access to its military bases and did not create the conditions for a Maoist victory either through the ballot box or through violence. Once unsure of whether the United States could afford to abandon allied dictators, American conservatives embraced the idea that national security went hand in hand with democracy promotion. Once reluctant to infringe in any way on the sovereign rights of foreign governments, American liberals now recognized that intervention could be bloodless and noble, in contrast to Reagan’s support for the anti-Communist guerrillas in Nicaragua and Angola, which they denounced as immorally violent.

South Korea

During this same time period, the political situation in South Korea bore a striking resemblance to the Philippines. Reagan was on excellent terms with South Korea’s head of state, General Chun, ensuring that tens of thousands of U.S. soldiers remained welcome in South Korea, where they served as an indispensable deterrent to a North Korean invasion.⁹ The South Korean opposition, however and especially the country’s student movement, profoundly resented the United States for supporting both Chun and his predecessors and felt ambivalent about, if not hostile to, the presence of U.S. troops in their country. In the 1970s and particularly in the early 1980s, their capacity to challenge the existing regime grew. Once again, the White House faced a situation in which its original strategy of supporting friendly dictators did not seem viable for the long haul.

As in the Philippines, the initial breakthrough for democratic reform in South Korea resulted from elections to a powerless legislature, this time in February 1985. Rather than orchestrate extensive fraud, however, Chun simply altered the formula for the distribution of seats to guarantee his supporters a majority. Although Chun’s party won a plurality of the vote, almost two-thirds of the electorate voted for a wide array of opposition parties, shocking and embarrassing the government. The government’s legitimacy was now threatened by the pro-democracy movement led by dissidents Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam.

Not long after Marcos fell from power in the Philippines, South Korea’s more emboldened democratic opposition hoped to participate in the 1987 presidential election. Any chance of winning would require a constitutional amendment mandating the direct election of the presi-

9. For an excellent account of the politics in South Korea and U.S.-South Korean relations, see Don Oberdorfer, *The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1997).

dent, instead of relying on a so-called electoral college handpicked by the sitting president. Chun insisted that the current system was fair, but he consented to negotiations, hoping to exhaust the opposition and divide its ranks. Talks dragged on from the fall of 1986 through the following spring, when Chun suspended the process after recognizing that Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam would not abandon their insistence on a direct election.

In the early years of his administration, President Ronald Reagan made clear his support for the South Korean regime as an important ally in the fight against Communism. At the same time, as early as 1984 during his visit to South Korea, Reagan also nudged Chun and his administration to begin a long evolutionary process of democratic reform.

The development of democratic political institutions is the surest means to build the national consensus that is the foundation for true security We welcome President Chun's far-sighted plans for a constitutional transfer of power in 1988. . . . Now, this will not be a simple process because of the ever present threat from the North. But I assure you once again of America's unwavering support and the high regard of democratic peoples everywhere as you take the bold and necessary steps toward political development.¹⁰

As South Korean politics began to heat up, Gaston Sigur, the new assistant secretary of state for East Asia, hoped to apply the same strategy in South Korea as Wolfowitz had used in the Philippines. He had the support of James Lilley, the new U.S. ambassador to South Korea. Whereas Lilley's predecessor had been extraordinarily close to Chun and made a point of avoiding any contact with the opposition, Lilley sought to enhance the stature of the two Kims and their allies by making it known that they were friends of the embassy. With Shultz's active support, Sigur pressured Chun to allow the direct election of his successor.¹¹ The general resisted, however, perhaps because Reagan himself remained conspicuously silent.

In June 1987, Chun announced that General Roh Tae-woo, one of his closest confidants, would be his party's nominee for president. In the absence of a direct vote, Roh's nomination amounted to a coronation. Within hours, riots broke out across South Korea. At the high point of the riots, Chun considered mobilizing the armed forces to crush dissent—a decision that almost surely would have led to hundreds of deaths. Chun pulled back at the last moment, however, partly because of a visit from Lilley, during which the envoy presented Chun with a personal letter from Reagan calling for restraint. Reagan, it seemed, had learned from the experience in the Philippines a year earlier. In the intervening year and a half, he had often pointed to the democratization of the Philippines as a signature achievement of his democracy promotion agenda. Reagan's affinity with the democratic breakthrough in the Philippines made it difficult for him to side against a popular pro-democratic movement in South Korea, and his close relationship with Chun meant that his message of change carried more weight. As David Adesnik and Sunhyuk Kim have written, "Ironically, Reagan's word carried considerable weight precisely because Reagan had embraced Chun without hesitation during the early and uncertain days of his regime."¹²

10. Reagan, November 12, 1984, as cited in A. David Adesnik and Sunhyuk Kim, *If at First You Don't Succeed: The Puzzle of South Korea's Democratic Transition*, CDDRL Working Paper (Stanford, Calif.: Center for Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law, Stanford University, 2008), p. 20.

11. Sigur gave a speech on February 6, 1987, in New York about the need for the South Korean military to get out of government, which allegedly infuriated George Shultz. When he visited South Korea later that year, however, Shultz insisted that Sigur's speech reflected U.S. policy. See Adesnik and Kim, "If at First You Don't Succeed."

12. *Ibid.*

To be sure, many other factors beyond Reagan's intervention dissuaded Chun from using force. His younger colonels and generals were hesitant, and extended violence might also have forced South Korea to surrender the 1988 Olympics. So instead, Chun and Roh turned to a political solution. After 18 days of rioting, Roh suddenly announced that he was also in favor of direct elections and almost all of the opposition's other demands, bringing the rioting to an end. Roh hoped that his gallant concession would help to differentiate him from the widely resented Chun and calculated that the opposition would break down into factions once its demands were met. He was right. Both Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam insisted on running for president, allowing Roh to win the election with a plurality of the vote. Although some feared that having another military president for a seven-year term would prevent the consolidation of democracy, this did not occur. Subsequent elections resulted in Kim Young-sam (1993–1998) and Kim Dae-jung (1998–2003) both serving a term as president.

Chile

By the mid-1980s, Chile's General Augusto Pinochet was one of only a handful of dictators to have survived the democratic tidal wave transforming Latin America. Initially, the Reagan administration had done its best to strengthen Pinochet's hold on power. In August 1981, Kirkpatrick visited Santiago and called for the full normalization of U.S.-Chilean relations. Along with other administration officials from the National Security Council, she lobbied Congress to lift the restrictions on military and economic aid to Chile that had been imposed during the Carter era. This vote of confidence was not enough, however, to insulate Pinochet from the pressure to reform. Many Chileans had never forgiven him for destroying Chile's proud heritage of liberal democracy; others resented the economic hardship they had to endure as a result of Pinochet's aggressive pro-market agenda. By the middle of the decade, the opposition had reorganized and began to call for democratic reforms.

The U.S. government's position on Chile began to change at the same time. As Shultz recalls in his memoirs: "By the start of the second Reagan term, however, I was convinced that the U.S. approach [supporting Pinochet without qualification] was not working. We understood Pinochet; he was not changing. But he did not understand us; we wanted a more open government, rule of law, and a government headed by elected officials."¹³ Fully aware that presidents rarely make radical policy changes in their second terms, Shultz—working closely with Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America Elliot Abrams and Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights Richard Shifter—first had to win the battle for a policy change toward Chile within the Reagan administration. To press the case for change, they forged an unusual alliance with several liberal Democrats in the Senate and House who shared with Shultz and Abrams a real contempt for right-wing dictators in the Western Hemisphere. This improbable alliance reflected democracy promotion's surprising ability to bridge the greatest of partisan divides and inspire both liberals and conservatives to work together for a common cause.¹⁴ From 1986 through 1988, the Reagan administration endorsed five UN resolutions critical of Pinochet's record on human rights (yet it also abstained on three and voted against one).¹⁵

13. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph*, p. 970.

14. The best account of the U.S. effort is found in Paul Sigmund, *The United States and Democracy in Chile* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

15. Smith, *America's Mission*, pp. 289–290, 293–294.

With the internal battle won, at least temporarily, Shultz persuaded Reagan to send a new ambassador to Chile, signaling change in U.S. policy. The task fell to Harry Barnes, who arrived in Santiago with the explicit mission to press for democratic change. Barnes continued to praise Chile's economic reforms but also went out of his way to meet with representatives of opposition political parties and promote the State Department's insistence on free and fair elections. In response, Pinochet reminded his U.S. allies that we are all "in a war between democracy and Marxism, between chaos and democracy."¹⁶ Pinochet also lambasted the United States for interfering in Chile's domestic affairs and equated advocacy of human rights with terrorism; the media portrayed Barnes as a terrorist sympathizer.

Nonetheless, Pinochet eventually consented to external and internal pressure and held a plebiscite on his rule in 1988, a vote that he was sure he would win. Chileans were given the chance to vote for or against extending Pinochet's rule another eight years. If the "no" votes prevailed, a multi-candidate election would be held the following year. Despite Pinochet's unpopularity, the dictator was aided by the opposition's fragmentation, the campaign's short duration, and the government's superior resources. In an attempt to compensate for such disadvantages, U.S. officials such as Abrams and Senator Tom Harkin personally pushed to unify the opposition, which in February 1988 eventually came together as a 16-party alliance called the Coalition of Parties for the No Vote.

In December 1987, Senator Harkin succeeded in earmarking \$1 million in congressional funds to go to the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to facilitate a democratic development in Chile. NED made a number of direct grants to a number of Chilean nongovernmental organizations and media outlets.¹⁷ Half of the NED money went to the National Democratic Institute, which sent American campaign consultants to provide advice to Chilean opposition leaders as they developed the "no" campaign against Pinochet's referendum. In particular, the Americans prodded their Chilean counterparts to run positive, upbeat television ads, even if the message was to vote "no." NDI also worked closely with Chilean pollsters affiliated with the democratic opposition to organize a parallel vote tabulation, or quick count similar to the NAMFREL exercise in the Philippines. NED also provided financial assistance to Chilean and U.S. NGOs for election monitoring training to ensure against fraud.

To Pinochet's surprise, as well as that of most Chileans, the plebiscite made it clear that the people had had enough of the dictator, with 54.5 percent voting for his ouster and just 43 percent asking him to stay. The next year, after a series of negotiations between Pinochet and the opposition to craft a transition, Chileans elected a Christian Democrat, Patricio Aylwin, to serve as their next president—completing Chile's return to democratic rule.

As in the Philippines and South Korea, internal political forces drove the democratization process in Chile. At the margins, however, American engagement of both the regime and society helped to tip the balance in a democratic direction. Pinochet most certainly felt the pressure from Washington to liberalize—pressure that was not there, for instance, during the Nixon administration. American engagement of Chile's political opposition also helped to build unity, strengthen legitimacy, and provide technical support for the advertising campaign and control of electoral fraud during the 1988 vote.

16. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph*, pp. 971–972.

17. For details of groups supported see the interview with NED President Carl Gershman in *El Mercurio*, January 10, 1988.

South Africa: “Constructive Engagement” Plus Sticks

The transition to democratic rule in South Africa occurred primarily due to changes in the balance of power between the apartheid regime and the democratic opposition.¹⁸ After decades of brutal repression, South Africa’s democratic opposition eventually inflated the costs of sustaining autocracy to levels beyond the capacity of the white ruling elites. To avoid full-scale revolution, South African president F.W. de Klerk initiated a process of political liberalization. In February 1990, de Klerk released ANC (African National Congress) leader Nelson Mandela after nearly three decades in prison.¹⁹ Mandela’s release set in motion a negotiated transition to democracy, which culminated in a new constitution and Mandela’s election as president in April 1994 during South Africa’s first free and fair vote.

Analyses of external influences on the South African transition rightly focus on the role of economic sanctions in facilitating it. Although opposed by President Reagan, the U.S. Congress eventually joined much of the Western world in implementing economic sanctions against South Africa by passing the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA) in October 1986.²⁰ Trade between the West and South Africa decreased dramatically in the mid-1980s, falling by 40 percent with the United States in 1987 after the Anti-Apartheid Act was enacted, and by smaller but significant margins with other West European countries.²¹ Institutional investors, including universities, pension funds, and local governments, also began to divest from South African companies, banks stopped lending to the government, and private companies suspended their operations inside South Africa. These costs incurred by white (and predominantly English) businessmen in South Africa eventually created a split within the ruling coalition and helped to encourage de Klerk to start negotiations with the ANC.

American engagement with the regime and the opposition also helped. Most important, the sanctions enacted in 1986 could have such a positive effect because American trade and investment with South Africa was so substantial before. Without high levels of economic interaction, economic sanctions have little bite. (By contrast, American sanctions today against Iran and Cuba have lost their punch because they have been in place for so long.)

Second, despite all the ridicule (including, at the time, from this author) that Reagan and Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker received for coining the phrase “constructive engagement” to describe their policy toward South Africa, the close relationship between the United States and the apartheid regime did give Washington special credibility with apartheid leaders. Reagan and his administration initially did little to use this special relationship to push for democratic change and instead were content to bolster relations to fight the common enemy—world

18. For comprehensive assessments, see Robert Price, *The Apartheid State in Crisis: Political Transformation in South Africa, 1975–1990* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Timothy Sisk, *Democratization in South Africa: The Elusive Social Contract* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

19. Philip I. Levy, “Sanctions on South Africa: What Did They Do?” *The American Economic Review* 89, no. 2 (May 1999): 415–20.

20. The CAAA severely restricted lending to South Africa and imposed import bans on iron, steel, coal, uranium, textiles, and agricultural goods. Strategic materials, diamonds, and most forms of gold were omitted. Levy, “Sanction on South Africa.”

21. Neta Crawford, “Trump Card or Theater?” in Neta Crawford and Audie Klotz, eds., *How Sanctions Work: Lessons from South Africa* (London: Macmillan Press, 1999), p. 12.

communism. As Gorbachev began to reform the Soviet Union internally and withdraw support for Communist revolutionaries abroad, the Reagan administration developed a more nuanced view toward national liberation movements in South Africa. As a result, it no longer treated SWAPO (the South West Africa People's Organization) in Namibia and the ANC in South Africa as merely Kremlin puppets, even though both organizations continued to receive substantial support from the Soviet Union.

On January 28, 1987, George Shultz became the first American secretary of state to meet with an ANC leader, Oliver Tambo—an act that started a process of removing the ANC from the State Department's terrorist list.²² The following year, Chester Crocker brokered a peace settlement in Namibia that included SWAPO as a central interlocutor. His successful negotiations for Namibian independence in 1988 underscored how cooperative diplomacy, not coercive sanctions, could produce democratic outcomes.²³ Incrementally, American leaders encouraged their South Africa counterparts to do the same: abandon their “war on terror” against the ANC and their allies inside South Africa and begin negotiations with the more moderate elements of the democratic opposition inside South Africa before the radicals seized power. With the Cold War winding down, the Americans stressed that it was safe to begin negotiations and dangerous to delay them any further. After the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991, the excuse of an external threat as a reason to maintain dictatorship waned even further.

Shultz's meeting with the ANC made it safe for other American organizations to engage with the South African democratic opposition in a more sustained way. U.S. Agency for International Development officials working inside South Africa provided direct assistance to NGOs affiliated with the anti-apartheid movement. In 1987, the NED began supporting the Democratic Alternative for South Africa (IDASA), “a research center that [sought] to improve communication and understanding between white and black communities.”²⁴ NDI established one of its first offices abroad inside South Africa in 1991 before the democratic transition began as a means for engaging more directly South Africa's democratic movement.

Again, none of this American engagement of the South Africa regime or the opposition played a decisive role in bringing down apartheid. Different from the Philippines, South Korea, and Chile, American coercive actions—sanctions and divestment—also helped to prod democratic change. In the margins, though, American prodding from above and support from below did facilitate an evolutionary transition from autocracy rule in a country in which most expected social revolution.

Confronting and Engaging Autocratic Foes

The Soviet Union

The grand narrative of the Cold War portrays the United States as pursuing a confrontational strategy of containment against the Soviet Union and its satellites, a strategy that eventually succeeded. Coercive policies—sanctions, ideological struggle, covert assistance to freedom fighters,

22. Shultz, *Triumph and Turmoil*, p. 901.

23. Chester Crocker, *High Noon in Southern Africa: Making Peace in a Rough Neighborhood* (New York: Norton, 1992).

24. National Endowment for Democracy, “NED 20th Anniversary Timeline.” Available at <http://www.ned.org/about/nedtimeline.html>, accessed September 4, 2008.

military buildup, and in Korea and Vietnam—defined the essence of the containment strategy. Communism in the Soviet Union eventually collapsed, or so the conventional wisdom tells us, because our coercive strategies eventually *compelled* Soviet leaders to abandon their political and economic systems.

Part of this narrative is true. Western sanctions, military support for the mujahideen in Afghanistan, and the U.S. military buildup in the 1980s, including the threat to build missile defense, did put pressure on the Soviet economy and compel some leaders, including most dramatically Mikhail Gorbachev, to seriously consider reform. However, Gorbachev was never compelled to undertake the reforms that he did.²⁵ A different Soviet leader might have met the challenge of keeping up with American military spending by increasing Soviet spending even more. A different Soviet leader might have responded to the Afghan war by calling for a surge of troops, not a withdrawal. In 1985, the year that Gorbachev became general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the Soviet economy was not on the verge of collapsing. On the contrary, the system was stable, even if not performing at a high rate. Had the Soviet economy weathered the storm of low oil prices in the late 1980s and 1990s, Communists in the Kremlin would have reaped the benefits of windfall revenues from skyrocketing energy prices of the last decade, an economic boost that could have compelled the command economy still decades into the future.

Gorbachev adopted a particular set of liberalizing economic and political reforms that were not inevitable. He did so not in response to American pressure, but in the context of improving relations with the United States.²⁶ In fact, the U.S. policy of engaging the Soviet Union began again soon after George Shultz became secretary of state in 1982, well before Gorbachev came to power in 1985. At the beginning of Reagan's presidency, many of the president's closest advisers did not want to have any contact with the Soviets. After Shultz joined the team in 1982, however, he began to challenge this policy of disengagement, arguing that United States needed to engage not only the Soviet leaders but also Soviet society. As he wrote in his memoirs about the start of the New Year in 1983, "I wanted to develop a strategy for a new start with the Soviet Union. I felt we had to try to turn the relationship around: away from confrontation and towards real problem solving."²⁷

Shultz's new strategy met resistance, but he was "determined not to hang back from engaging the Soviets because of fears that the 'Soviet wins negotiations.'"²⁸ In reengaging, Shultz never let the negotiations focus just on arms control, but insisted on an expanded agenda that always included human rights and democracy. Again, from his memoirs, "We were determined not to allow the Soviets to focus our negotiations simply on matters of arms control. So we continuously adhered to a broad agenda: human rights, regional issues, arms control, and bilateral issues."²⁹ Shultz never saw negotiations or expanding contacts with Soviets and Americans as a concession to Moscow or a signal of legitimacy for the Communist dictatorship. In the debate about opening consulates in both countries—a move that some hard-liners at the time saw as a sign of weakness—Shultz firmly supported the idea as a change in the American national interest. As he quotes from a memoran-

25. McFaul, *Russia's Unfinished Revolution*, chapter 2.

26. More generally, a more benign international environment anchored by a liberal democratic power rather than threatening autocratic powers in Europe and Asia made it safer for internal reform inside the Soviet Union. This argument is persuasively developed in Daniel Duedney and G. John Ikenberry, "The International Sources of Soviet Change," *International Security*: 16, no 3 (Winter 1991/1992): 74–118.

27. Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph*, p. 159.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 267.

dum that he wrote in 1982, “I believe the next step on our part should be to propose the negotiation of a new U.S.-Soviet cultural agreement and the opening of U.S. and Soviet consulates in Kiev and New York . . . Both of these proposals will sound good to the Soviets, but are unambiguously in our interest when examined from a hardheaded American viewpoint.”³⁰

Shultz’s strategy eventually reaped real benefits once Gorbachev came to power. As relations between the United States and the Soviet Union became less confrontational and more cooperative during the Gorbachev era, Gorbachev felt more emboldened to pursue radical political and economic reform at home. Gorbachev announced his most revolutionary democratic reforms at the 19th Party Conference in June 1988, years after the thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations had begun and a month after Ronald Reagan’s historic trip to Moscow in May 1988. By that time, Reagan was not seeking to confront the “evil empire,” but was instead developing a deep, personal rapport with Gorbachev. Shultz and Soviet foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze established a similar bond. To be sure, the United States continued to supply Stinger missiles to insurgents in Afghanistan, and Reagan went out of his way to demonstrate solidarity with those inside the Soviet Union who were persecuted for their religious and political beliefs. But compared with the hostile and tense atmosphere surrounding American-Iranian relations today, U.S.-Soviet relations at the dawn of political liberalization inside the USSR were downright friendly.

President George H.W. Bush continued to engage Gorbachev. Although initially skeptical of Gorbachev’s true intentions, Bush eventually embraced Gorbachev as a Soviet leader ready to deliver on foreign policy outcomes that the United States desired, be it the fall of the Berlin Wall, German unification, or Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. The Bush administration did not want to do anything that might weaken or undermine America’s trusted friend in the Kremlin. In fact, Bush went out of his way to aid the Soviet Union’s survival, including most famously in a speech in Kyiv in August 1991, when he warned of the dangers of ethnic conflict fueled by state collapse. Bush did proclaim, “We support the struggle in this great country for democracy and economic reform.” At the same time, he warned advocates of Ukrainian independence that

freedom cannot survive if we let despots flourish or permit seemingly minor restrictions to multiply until they form chains, until they form shackles. . . . Yet freedom is not the same as independence. America will not support those who seek independence in order to replace a far-off tyranny with a local despotism. They will not aid those who promote a suicidal nationalism based upon ethnic hatred. We will support those who want to build democracy.³¹

Bush even proposed having a summit with Gorbachev in the summer of 1991 as a move to “take some pressure off him at home.”³² Even after the August 1991 coup had failed and the collapse of the Soviet Union was obvious to everyone, Bush still tried to persuade other European leaders to support Gorbachev and his quest to preserve the USSR.³³

This relatively benign international context made it easier for Gorbachev to pursue his radical domestic agenda of change. During this period of warm relations with the United States, Gor-

30. Ibid., p. 275.

31. President George H.W. Bush, “Remarks to the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of the Ukraine in Kiev, Soviet Union,” August 1, 1991, available at http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/public_papers.php?id=3267&year=1991&month=8.

32. George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1998), p. 501.

33. James M. Goldgeier and Michael McFaul, *Power and Purpose: U.S. Policy toward Russia after the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003).

bachev did not worry that his “enemy” would seek to take advantage of his country’s weakness as it underwent the chaotic transformation from Communism to something else. A more hostile international environment might have made Gorbachev more cautious. The West’s embrace of Gorbachev in turn made Gorbachev more powerful inside the Soviet Union, at least for a time, in his struggles with both the left and the right.

Greater engagement with the Soviet regime was complemented by greater engagement of the democratic opposition inside Russia and the other republics. The former was a precondition for the latter. During more tense eras in U.S.-Soviet relations, groups such as NED had a difficult time operating inside the USSR. As diplomatic relations thawed, however, nongovernmental activity to promote democracy became possible. During this period of detente, the NED, the NDI, the International Republican Institute (IRI), and the AFL-CIO established working relationships with, and provided limited financial assistance to, leaders and organizations of Russia’s opposition. The AFL-CIO gave assistance to striking coal miners in 1989 and again in 1991 and later helped to establish the Independent Miners Union in Russia.³⁴ During the same period, grants from the NED provided fax machines, computers, and advisers to the Russian Constitutional Commission. And while President Bush issued warnings about the dangers of nationalism, the NED was offering assistance to national democratic movements in the Baltics, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia.³⁵

In 1991, the NED approved a major grant to fund a printing press for the Democratic Russia movement. Similarly, the NDI initially directed “its efforts towards the institutions which are spearheading democratic reform—the city soviets and the republics of Russia and Ukraine.”³⁶ This focus was directly counter to the Bush administration’s policy of supporting the center and the Union. The NDI avoided direct financial transfers to Russian organizations at the time but did provide technical assistance, training, and limited equipment to Democratic Russia during this period. NDI also provided recognition to Russia’s democrats by working closely with Russia’s foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev, and by giving its prestigious international democracy award to St. Petersburg mayor Anatoly Sobchak in 1991. The International Republican Institute—called the National Republican Institute at the time—became deeply engaged in party-building programs with Russian counterparts well before the Soviet Union collapsed.

At the time, all of these nongovernmental organizations received the bulk of their funding from government sources.³⁷ Indirectly, therefore, the U.S. government was using a dual-track strategy to promote democratization within the Soviet Union and Russia. At times, however, officials representing the U.S. government and representatives from the nongovernmental organizations clashed regarding appropriate engagement with Russia’s “revolutionaries.” These American NGOs

34. . For an overview, see Linda Cook, *Labor and Liberalization: Trade Unions in the New Russia* (New York: Twentieth Century Fund Press, 1997), chapter 5.

35. At its May 1988 meeting, the NED board adopted a resolution that considered support to national democratic movements crucial for promoting democracy within the Soviet Union. The NED board member, Zbigniew Brzezinski—elected to the board in 1987—played a central role in pushing NED in this direction. (Interview and e-mail exchange with Nadia Diuk, NED program officer for this region since 1987, March 4, 2003).

36. NDI, *Report of the Survey Mission to the Soviet Union: July 29-August 3, 1990* (Washington, 1990) p. 22. For a description of NDI programs in the Soviet Union, see NDI, *The Commonwealth of Independent States: Democratic Developments Issues and Options* (Washington, January 1992).

37. Since its inception in 1984, NED has received money directly from the U.S. Congress. In parallel to its own grants programs, NED also gives grants to NDI, IRI, the AFL-CIO, and others. As these nongovernmental (NGOs) expanded their programs in the former Soviet Union, they began to receive the greater share of the funds for the region from the U.S. Agency for International Development.

vigorously defended their independence from the U.S. government and occasionally engaged in domestic “meddling” inside the USSR that contradicted Bush’s pledge of noninterference. Most of the time, under the steady stewardship of Ambassador Jack Matlock, Jr., these nongovernmental actors worked closely with local U.S. officials. Matlock himself was an active promoter of engagement with Russia’s revolutionaries.³⁸ He hosted dinners and discussion groups with these anti-Soviet leaders and groups at Spaso House, the ambassador’s residence in Moscow, including a luncheon with Ronald Reagan and human rights activists in May 1988.³⁹ These events gave symbolic but important recognition to these new political leaders.

The degree of engagement or level of resources devoted to aiding the democrats was minuscule, compared, for instance, with the efforts dedicated to aid the anti-regime forces in Serbia a decade later. And this assistance began only a few years and sometimes just a few months before the Soviet collapse and the perceived (at the time) victory of the “democrats.” Democratic mobilization against the autocratic regime did not last for decades, as in other cases of external assistance. On the contrary, the old regime fell much faster than any of the external providers of democratic assistance expected, thereby relegating these outside actors to only a marginal role in the drama.

Poland

During the Cold War, Poland’s anti-Communist forces developed a reputation as one of the most threatening to Soviet domination in Eastern Europe. In 1956, 1968, 1970, 1976, and then most dramatically in 1980–1981 under the leadership of the trade union Solidarity, Polish civil society mobilized serious challenges to the Communist regime, only to be thwarted each time. General Jaruzelski’s declaration of martial law on December 11, 1981, was particularly violent and comprehensive. Although Solidarity leaders were arrested or went into exile, the anti-Communist movement never disappeared but went underground, reemerging again in February 1988 in the form of wildcat strikes against major price hikes.

As a strategy to quell popular protest, Jaruzelski initiated negotiations with Solidarity leaders at the time, a process that eventually produced the famous roundtable talks. Worried about another crackdown, the Polish opposition initially sought limited objectives. As Adam Michnik’s parsimonious phrase—“your president, our premier”—captured, the Polish Round Table Talks of 1989 were a grand bargain, in which both sides hoped to still participate in politics. Polish Communist elites also believed that they could win a majority of seats if elections were held and therefore were not afraid of some limited steps toward democratization.⁴⁰

The compromise reached, of course, was highly undemocratic, just like most successful pacts in other transitions to democracy. But none of the concessions stuck. In the first elections in 1989, 35 percent of the seats in the Sejm were reserved for the Communists and another 30 percent for their allies. After Solidarity swept the elections for the contested seats, however, the balance of power between opposing sides became apparent and thereby undermined the compromises that resulted from the roundtable negotiations. By the fall 1990 presidential ballot, the pact had unraveled completely and a revolutionary leader of the masses—Lech Walesa—was elected president in a landslide.

38. His engagement is chronicled in Matlock, *Autopsy of an Empire*.

39. On this luncheon with Reagan, see Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph*, pp. 1102–1103.

40. Michael Kennedy, “Contingencies and the Alternatives of 1989: Toward a Theory and Practice of Negotiated Revolution,” *East European Politics and Societies* 13, no. 3 (Spring 1999): 300.

The main external actor in this case of democratization was the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, not Ronald Reagan or George H.W. Bush. Gorbachev practiced constructive engagement with the Warsaw Pact's most hard-line leaders to urge them to reform.⁴¹ When political change did begin to accelerate in Poland and Hungary, Gorbachev signaled that he would not try to interrupt the process, even though conservatives in his own party and government severely criticized him for his acquiescence.

However, improved relations between the Soviet Union and the United States in the late 1980s created the permissive international conditions for internal change inside Poland. At the time, Gorbachev promoted his idea of a "common European home," which in essence meant greater integration of the Soviet Union into the West. He and his foreign minister Eduard Shevardnadze understood well that Soviet support for crackdown on Polish strikers would interrupt the East-West thaw he so desired. American encouragement of Gorbachev helped to make democratic change in Poland and later elsewhere in the region more tolerable for the Soviet leader. Had the United States pursued a confrontational, threatening policy toward the Soviet Union at the time, Gorbachev would have been less supportive of internal change in Poland, and his conservative critics also would have enjoyed a stronger political position internally.

American engagement of both the autocratic regime and the democratic opposition also helped. During Solidarity's initial awakening in 1980–1981, U.S. government officials not only praised the trade union, but also provided financial credit and economic assistance to the Communist regime as a signal of encouragement for their toleration of political liberalization.⁴² After martial law was declared in December 1981, Reagan expressed "moral revulsion at the police-state tactics of Poland's oppressors" and ensured that "their crime will cost them dearly in the future dealings with America and free peoples everywhere" by announcing a new set of sanctions against the Polish government and later the USSR. As the crackdown continued, Reagan's government explored channels to assist the underground Solidarity movement in exile and underground, including channeling direct financial aid to the union through the AFL-CIO, a strategy that "[in] the end . . . was responsible for channeling over \$4 million to Solidarity."⁴³ Reagan also shared intelligence and analysis with Pope John Paul II to coordinate their activities in aiding the Polish resistance.⁴⁴ And Reagan and his administration continually praised Solidarity leaders as democratic heroes.

American sanctions did not force the Polish regime to reconsider its repressive ways, but instead increased Polish trade and economic interaction with the Soviet Union. Initially, according to Gregory Domber, "Western political pressure also backfired. Rather than forcing the Poles into a conciliatory dialogue with the West, PZPR [the Polish Communist Party] reacted to American political pressure by doing all it could to stymie and restrict political relations, constantly berating American representatives in Warsaw for interfering in internal Polish affairs."⁴⁵ Over time, however, the Polish authorities began to see increased interaction with the West as a means for

41. Gorbachev's talks with East German leader Honecker are most famous. See Gorbachev, *Memoirs*, p. 523.

42. Gregory Domber, *Evaluating International Influences on Democratic Development: Poland 1980–1989*, CDDRL Working Paper (Stanford, Calif.: Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law, Stanford University, 2008).

43. See Arch Puddington, *Lane Kirkland: Champion of American Labor* (New York: Wiley, 2005), p. 189.

44. Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi, *His Holiness* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), pp. 268–269.

45. Domber, "Evaluating International Influences," p. 46.

addressing Poland's economic ills. Rather than try to squeeze the Polish economy even further, both the United States and Western Europe began to ease sanctions and increase trade and credits to the Polish Communist regime *before* democratic change. The hostile international environment emboldened Jaruzelski to begin negotiations with Solidarity leaders. Like many other autocratic departures, miscalculation played a critical role in undermining Polish Communist power, but Jaruzelski and his government were more likely to make these misjudgments at a time when the United States was encouraging them, not when the United States was seeking to use coercive instruments to undermine them.

In both these cases of engagement of foes to facilitate democratic change, the timing of engagement was critical. Just as earlier periods of sustained deep ties with autocratic allies created the necessary preconditions for nudging them in a democratic direction, sustained periods of confrontational actions were preconditions for allowing rapprochement to facilitate internal change in the Soviet Union and Poland. But when the governments in Moscow and Warsaw did begin to inch toward political liberalization, American recognition and then encouragement of these internal changes played a positive role in accelerating the democratization process.

Cuba

The contrast with Cuba is striking. U.S.-Cuban relations never underwent a period of rapprochement similar to U.S.-Soviet relations in the 1980s. Obviously, no Gorbachev-like figure emerged in Cuba in the 1980s as Fidel Castro maintained his iron grip on power. Instead, the American sanctions regime has remained in place, and government-to-government relations have remained tense, which in turn has made it more difficult for American NGOs to engage Cuban civil society. Through the Cold War and to today, this confrontational strategy has not produced democratic change in Cuba. The same could be said about America's failed efforts to promote democratic change in Iran.

Lessons for the Future?

Engaging Our Autocratic Friends for Change

Intimate American relationships with authoritarian regimes in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan and cordial relationships with autocratic rulers in Azerbaijan, Equatorial Guinea, and Kazakhstan undermine U.S. credibility when we criticize similar kinds of regimes with less friendly ties to Washington.⁴⁶ Terminating diplomatic relations with these countries, however, would not facilitate democratic change. Just continuing business as usual also does not encourage political liberalization. Instead, learning from the experiences of the Cold War, the Obama administration must develop a more sophisticated strategy of engaging our autocratic friends that allows the United States to pursue its material and strategic interests in the short term while simultaneously doing more to encourage evolutionary change in these kinds of regimes.

To more clearly demarcate America's interests from its values, U.S. diplomats have to maintain more vigilance in curtailing flowery, friendly language to describe the leaders and governments

46. "With Friends Like These . . . Condoleezza Rice's Inglorious Moment," *Washington Post*, April 18, 2006, p. A18.

of these kinds of countries. U.S. foreign policy officials also must reject the false linkage between cooperation and silence on human rights abuses that autocrats try to make a condition of engagement. Instead, U.S. officials should go out of their way to engage democratic activists in these same places. Our autocratic friends in power must understand that we respect their democratic challengers. Historical experience has confirmed, though not always, that U.S. engagement with societal leaders can help protect them from harassment and imprisonment. And only in the rarest of cases has a friendly autocratic regime stopped working with the United States on a strategic issue of mutual benefit because an American official criticized this same regime for antidemocratic practices. Arrests or crackdowns on democratic forces in these countries demand commensurate responses from American officials.

In addition, American aid to these regimes should be disaggregated into one channel for support for geostrategic cooperation and another channel for democracy and development assistance. Bribes paid in the pursuit of geostrategic ends should not be dressed up as “democracy assistance” as currently happens with Egypt. To the extent possible, these kinds of transfers also must be reduced as they amount in essence to the American promotion of autocracy. For instance, U.S. aid to Egypt jumped to roughly \$2 billion a year after 1979 as a payment for Egyptian recognition of Israel. Thirty years later, is the U.S. really obligated to continue to pay? Such transfers with no strings attached produce little economic development or political liberalization—the very kinds of changes that could save regimes in Egypt and Pakistan from revolutionary challengers.

Over the long term, the United States must engage more actively in pressing our autocratic friends to initiate incremental political liberalization, and eventually pacts, negotiations, and roundtable discussions with democratic forces in society. In many (though by no means all) successful transitions from authoritarian rule to democracy, interim settlements between the incumbent autocrats and challenging democrats have helped to smooth political change.⁴⁷ In particular, pacts often have been crafted to limit the agenda of change to political institutions only, and not infringe on the property rights of existing economic actors tied to the *ancien regime*. Successful pacts often include highly undemocratic features that serve to bridge the gap from one regime type to the next. Pacts also can be used to ensure the safety of leaders from the existing autocratic regime. In crafting these delicate and unjust pacts, external actors such as the United States can play pivotal roles as mediators and as guarantors that the terms of the pacts are followed.

In the Middle East and South Asia, how and whether to engage Islamists in these negotiations about democratic change remains a fundamental challenge for both autocratic leaders and their American counterparts. Some lessons from successful democratic transitions are clear; others are not. Most important, all Islamists are not alike.⁴⁸ Within the Arab world, some self-identified

47. Terry Lynn Karl, “Petroleum and Political Pacts: The Transition to Democracy in Venezuela,” *Latin American Research Review* 22 (1987): 63–94; and Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), chapter 4. A pact is not a necessary condition for a successful democratic transition, but most certainly enhances the probability of success. See Terry Lynn Karl and Philippe Schmitter, “Democratization around the Globe: Opportunities and Risks,” in Michael Klare and Daniel Thomas, *World Security* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), pp. 43–62.

48. For some typologies and criteria for distinguishing amongst Islamist movements, see Tamara Cofman Wittes, *Freedom’s Unsteady March: America’s Role in Building Arab Democracy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2008); and Nathan Brown, Amr Hamzawy, and Marina Ottaway, “Islamist Movements and the Democratic Process in the Arab World: Exploring the Gray Zones,” *Carnegie Papers*, No. 61 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 2006).

Islamists, such as al Qaeda in Iraq, seek the re-creation of the caliphate as their main goal and use terror as their means. Others, including Hamas and Hezbollah, focus on specific local political grievances while embracing both Islamist tropes and violent means. But many other Islamist parties have embraced democracy (even when their governments have not) and denounce any form of violence as a strategy for achieving their ends (even if some in this category still condone violence carried out by the other two types of Islamists against U.S. or Israeli targets). These parties compare themselves with Turkey's Justice and Development Party (AKP) and Europe's Christian Democrats. They must be part of any negotiated transition from authoritarian rule.

Doctrinal statements and analogies do not signal clearly what these parties would do should they come to power. Commitments to nonviolence and procedural democracy are not enough. Assessing an Islamist movement's compatibility with democratic politics also requires determining that movement's attitudes toward pluralism, alternation of power, individual rights, and the equality before the law of women and religious minorities. Although internal democracy and transparency can help to make these judgments, ultimately only participation in the democratic practice will tell. No oppositionists (Islamist or otherwise) can be reliably tested without a political process open enough to put them into positions of authority.

The beauty of pacted transitions initiated by powerful autocrats is that incumbents can guide the pace of change and insulate certain state institutions, such as the army or the monarchy, from immediate exposure to democratic control. The democratic credentials of new participants in the political process can be tested in the parliament, for instance, before handing over control of all state institutions to the democratic process.

Consequently, U.S. officials should encourage leaders of friendly autocratic regimes to start the process of pacted transition *now* while they still can help to manage the process of change, rather than waiting for when more revolutionary actors in society gain strength. U.S. leaders should encourage their counterparts in the region to emulate the evolutionary transition from autocracy to democracy in Spain and avoid the revolutionary transition from autocracy to a new form of autocracy in Iran.

In the past, autocratic friends of the United States consistently overestimated threats to stability and U.S. security interests from democratization. In transitions from authoritarian rule in Portugal, Spain, the Philippines, South Korea, Chile, South Africa, Indonesia, and Turkey, the threat turned out to be much less radical than originally imagined. As democracy took root, the threat faded even further. In none of these cases did democratization produce anti-American governments or fundamentally undermine U.S. national security interests. Of course, we cannot know with certainty if a similar process would unfold after political liberalization in the Middle East or South Asia, but processes of evolutionary change already launched in Morocco, Jordan, and Kuwait suggest that a similar result could be achieved.

Successful democratizers must be generously rewarded with economic assistance and security guarantees. In 2007, Senators Joseph Biden and Richard Lugar proposed a "democracy dividend" of \$1.5 billion annually for Pakistan as a reward for holding and restoring democracy.⁴⁹ This is a mechanism that should be established to respond quickly to other countries achieving democratic breakthroughs. In special circumstances, U.S. officials must be prepared to offer falling autocrats a safe exit out of the country and safe haven to enjoy retirement from politics. However unjust, safe

49. Joseph Biden, "A New Approach to Pakistan," *The Huffington Post*, November 8, 2007, accessed July 29, 2008, at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joe-biden/a-new-approach-to-pakista_b_71733.html.

passage out of the country for an autocratic ruler can be a necessary condition for peaceful regime change.

Avoiding change forever is simply not an option. Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, the United States sought to protect its interests in the Middle East by aligning itself with authoritarian regimes as a strategy to maintain the existing balance of power in the region. The results of this strategy included hostages in Tehran, a protracted war between Iraq and Iran in which Saddam Hussein used weapons of mass destruction, the slaughter of French and American soldiers in Beirut, the invasion of Kuwait by our former ally (a former ally who ruthlessly slaughtered tens of thousands of his citizens to maintain the “status quo”), and the gradual, almost imperceptible growth of the most ruthless and violent terrorist organization ever known—al Qaeda. Now, before incumbent dictatorships face serious challengers, is the time for U.S. officials to deploy the tools of diplomacy to nudge democratization forward. By doing so, we can enhance the probability of evolutionary change and lessen the likelihood of revolutionary change.

Engaging Autocratic Foes

It is no coincidence that the United States pursues more confrontational strategies for promoting democratic change against those countries with strained relations with the United States, while adopting policies of engagement to induce democratic change with American friends and allies. This hypocrisy in U.S. foreign policy is accentuated when American presidents actively use coercive tools to promote regime change in the first category, but not the other. The Reagan Doctrine provided financial and military assistance to “freedom fighters” seeking to undermine Communist regimes in Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, and Nicaragua, but did not extend such support to freedom fighters in Indonesia, Mexico, South Africa, or Taiwan. President Bush’s axis of evil speech threatened autocratic regimes in Iran, Iraq, and North Korea, while conspicuously leaving Pakistan or Saudi Arabia off this list.

This bifurcated strategy has produced very uneven results. Although useful perhaps for achieving other U.S. policy objectives, coercive strategies have rarely facilitated democratic change. When it has worked, democracy was a by-product, not the immediate aim, of the initial intervention. After war, the United States succeeded in facilitating democratic change in Germany, Japan, Italy, Austria, Panama, Grenada, and to a lesser extent in Bosnia and Kosovo. The possibility of democracy still remains in Afghanistan and Iraq. In none of these cases, however, was democracy promotion the goal of U.S. military intervention. Twice in American history—Panama in 1992 and Haiti in 1994—the president has ordered American forces to invade a country in order to *restore* democracy. Neither of these two deployments of American troops could be considered acts of war. In all other wars in American history, including the invasion of Iraq, U.S. presidents have invoked imminent security threats to the American people—not democracy promotion—to justify American military action.

In surveying the list of contemporary autocracies with strained relations with the United States—Burma, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, and possibly Russia and China—the use of military force or even covert aid to surrogate forces would have disastrous consequences for democratization. Especially in the wake of Iraq and Afghanistan, the deployment of U.S. military power to foster regime change is so unimaginable that President Obama should codify a new doctrine of U.S. foreign policy, which states that the United States does not use military force to promote democracy, period.

Sanctions also rarely succeed in promoting democratic change. Their application makes American and Western leaders feel good, but their effectiveness has been limited, especially when in place over long periods of time.⁵⁰ They work most effectively when deployed against a country to restore democracy after a coup. They also work best against countries with deep economic connections to the United States and the West. Sanctions played a positive role against South Africa only after decades of uninterrupted trade and investment with the West—that is, because South African companies had something to lose from their application. In countries like Burma, Cuba, and Iran, where the United States interrupted trade and investment decades ago, the United States has weak levers of economic coercion. Sanctions also only work when pursued multilaterally. Today, especially when seeking to promote democratic change in powerful, anti-American authoritarian regimes, American leaders have few effective economic tools available. Skyrocketing energy prices immunized oil and gas exporters like Iran, Russia, and Venezuela from economic sanctions, while American levels of trade, investment, and debt with China also undermine the credibility of sanction threats.

More generally, as discussed in the cases of the Soviet Union and Cuba, periods of high tension between the United States and autocratic foes rarely have facilitated internal democratic change in these countries and more often create a pretense for greater levels of political oppression. In rethinking the U.S. strategy for democracy promotion in these kinds of countries, the first step must be the expansion of the agenda for government-to-government relations. With Iran, for instance, this means an offer of direct talks with the theocrats in Tehran. The agenda of these negotiations must include everything: the prospect of formal diplomatic relations and of lifting sanctions; the potential supply and disposal of nuclear fuel (from a third-party organization or state); suspension of nuclear enrichment; an end of aid to Hezbollah and Hamas; and a serious discussion about stopping the arrests of students and human rights advocates as well as the persecution of union leaders and religious minorities. Discussion of new regional security institutions also should be on the table. With Cuba, a new initiative to engage the regime would have to include the restoration of diplomatic relations and the lifting of sanctions as well as discussion about political prisoners and the repression of political activities.

With Russia, this strategy means developing a more comprehensive bilateral agenda with the Russian government on issues of mutual concern, such as preventing weapons of mass destruction from falling into the hands of terrorists, addressing Iran's nuclear ambitions, reducing our nuclear arsenals, securing stable supplies of oil and gas from Russia and Eurasia, discussing European security issues, expanding connections between our societies, and increasing investment opportunities.

With China, a comprehensive and mostly positive bilateral agenda already does exist. Without question, U.S.-Chinese relations today are a vast improvement over the 22-year period when no contacts existed. Greater state-to-state relations have facilitated increased societal contacts between Americans and Chinese, including even some contacts between Chinese democratic leaders, independent journalists, and civil society activists. These interactions were much more

50. As a rule of thumb, the world democratic community should take their cues about sanctions from the democratic opposition in the target country. If those sitting in jail for their democratic beliefs advocate sanctions, then the United States should support them. If democratic leaders argue against sanctions, then American policymakers should not second-guess their thinking. The struggle against apartheid in South Africa is the classic example when local democrats supported sanctions. The current situation in Iran is a counter example in which most Iranian dissidents and human rights leaders do not support sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

constrained when the United States did not have diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China.

Obviously, as the case of China illustrates, engagement of authoritarian regimes *alone* does little to promote democratic change. For the strategy to work, American diplomats must practice the dual-track diplomacy advocated by George Shultz in dealing with the Soviet Union: the parallel and simultaneous engagement of autocratic leaders who run the state and the democratic leaders in society.⁵¹ Historical analogies only go far, but the general principles of Shultz's dual-track diplomacy still apply today. When engaging Russians to reduce our nuclear arsenals or Iranians to end their nuclear enrichment program, Americans must not check their values at the door. Nor should they allow their interlocutors to narrow the scope of bilateral relations to only arms control issues. If developed carefully, a more substantive, less confrontational relationship with these autocratic regimes can be a necessary condition for beginning a more meaningful dialogue about issues of democracy and the role of civil society.

A more substantial government-to-government agenda also will create a more favorable environment for engaging societal forces in these countries pushing for democratic change. American NGOs involved in democracy promotion do not have offices in Tehran or Havana. Democratic activists in Cuba, Iran, North Korea, and Syria face severe constraints in making contacts with their counterparts in other countries largely because of their regime's activities, but also because of real difficulties of obtaining American visas. In Iran, even the opening of a U.S. interest section would greatly facilitate contacts between Iranian democrats and their American supporters. The public relations coup of a giant line of Iranians waiting outside a U.S. interest section or embassy to get visas should not be underestimated. Greater contact between Iranian and American societies in turn will further undermine the regime's legitimacy, strengthen the independence of Iranian economic and political groups, and perhaps even compel some regime members to cash out and exchange their diminishing political power for enduring property rights.

51. Abbas Milani, Michael McFaul, and Larry Diamond, "A Win-Win Strategy for Dealing with Iran," *The Washington Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 121–138.

6

DEMOCRACY SUPPORT

Alexander T.J. Lennon

Zbigniew Brzezinski, recalling French strategic thinker Raymond Aron's advice, recently counseled that "the strength of a great power is diminished if it ceases to serve an idea."¹ Since its inception and throughout U.S. history, democracy has been that idea. Yet, recent setbacks warrant reevaluating the place of democracy promotion in U.S. strategy. What role, if any, should democracy have in U.S. security strategy and public diplomacy today?

Extensive interviews with former senior policymakers and diplomats, strategic analysts and democracy experts, along with in-depth explorations of alternative strategies by Larry Diamond, Francis Fukuyama, and Michael McFaul, all enhanced by an elite, bipartisan advisory committee, helped understand the strategic community's perceived shortfalls in democracy promotion today, shape alternatives for how it might be recast, and recommend the role for democracy, or some similar concept, in U.S. security strategy.

Strategic Interests: Why Does the United States Care?

The consolidation and spread of democracy in the rest of the world unequivocally remains a U.S. strategic interest, but members of the strategic community hold multiple reasons why. Democracy has been central to the American identity since the Founding Fathers and the idea of the United States as a "shining city on a hill." It has subsequently been pursued by, among others, Woodrow Wilson's appeal to "make the world safe for democracy," Franklin D. Roosevelt's articulation of four freedoms, Ronald Reagan's call at Westminster "to foster the infrastructure of democracy," and the William J. Clinton administration's strategy of engagement and "enlargement of the world's community of market democracies" before George W. Bush's recent efforts.²

Others may make moral or values-based claims, but democracy is today cited as an important part, but not the central animating feature, of U.S. security strategy for three main reasons. First, there is an enduring belief in at least a mild version of the "democratic peace theory" that mature democracies do not fight each other, even as concerns about unstable transitions have been raised. Second, democracies are seen to be better decisionmakers, more reliable partners, and more likely to be rule-abiding participants in a cooperative international system. Third, helping aspiring states become democracies, without imposing democracy on others, would restore the U.S. image as

1. Brzezinski, *Second Chance*, p. 180.

2. Remarks of Anthony Lake, September 21, 1993, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/lakedoc.html>.

a benevolent global power. Although each reason could potentially lead to divergent priorities within democracy strategy (for example, prioritizing the Middle East, China, or Latin America, respectively), the spread of democracy remains a strategic U.S. interest.

Recent Lessons Learned

The question is how to go about doing it, with recent lessons principally being drawn from three experiences. Although democracy was not the principal public justification for Iraq until after weapons of mass destruction were not found, it is clear that Iraq has become the poster child for democracy promotion gone awry. Broadly, the sentiment now exists to declare a new doctrine, as articulated by Michael McFaul, “that the United States does not use military force to promote democracy, period.” Another expert elaborated that “military force should never be used to impose democracy. I think we should not rule it out to *restore* democracy, which we did in Haiti with a resolution of the Security Council . . . [but] not in a country that’s never been democratic.” More than just military force, coercive democratization is now viewed skeptically. Much greater hope is placed in efforts to use foreign assistance, particularly the Millennium Challenge Account, and other incentives for democracy.

Hamas’s victory in the January 2006 Palestinian elections, the second case, reaffirmed that elections alone do not make a democracy. But a more subtle lesson being drawn is that elections can be held too early, before a critical mass of institutions and political culture has been established. One former official outlined three baskets of democracy assistance: civil society; representative governance (free press, elections, et cetera); and governance. He and others concluded that the United States had been focusing on getting countries to that first election, but was not yet very good at governance or helping them after the first election.

The principal recent U.S. strategic mistake, however, is seen as the loss of U.S. credibility from the gap between its grand rhetorical declarations and public action in places like Egypt, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. In particular, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had canceled a planned trip to Egypt in February 2005 after Ayman Nour, a political opponent of Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak, was imprisoned. After he was released and rearrested, however, Rice visited Mubarak in Egypt in February 2006, soon after the Palestinian elections, and did not publicly mention Nour, raising accusations of U.S. inconsistency, hypocrisy, and the loss of credibility.

These negative lessons to avoid coercive measures, early elections, and appearances of hypocrisy are not the only ones being drawn. Four positive principles may also guide future U.S. policy. First, democracy is a long, complex, and ultimately indigenous process, not an end state. That requires the United States to be more patient—even if that will be difficult in an American political culture that often requires near-term returns or, to be more blunt, instant gratification. It means seeking “gradual and serious” progress, not just elections.

Second, the United States needs to be more humble—both modest about the limits of U.S. power generally and humble about the complexity of democratic transitions. “The overarching question isn’t what the U.S. *should* do, it’s what *can* the government do,” one analyst encapsulated, emphasizing that indigenous actors have to take the lead.

Third, the United States should work cooperatively, acting side-by-side with a range of actors: nongovernmental organizations, other governments (particularly European), and regional as well

as other multilateral organizations. The United States may have more potential than any other single country to help democracies, but its efforts will ultimately be more effective, sustainable, and less subject to resentment and backlash when working with others.

Fourth, the United States should be more pragmatic. It should acknowledge not only that it has other interests in the world, but that it has different amounts of leverage and ways of utilizing it (such as, public or private) and that countries ultimately have different needs. Such variations mean charges of hypocrisy are inevitable, even if they can be minimized by changes in U.S. strategy.

Pillars of a Democracy Support Strategy

To be patient, humble, cooperative, and pragmatic, U.S. strategy requires country-specific and regional approaches, brought together globally under the umbrella of “democracy support.” “Democracy promotion” has become a toxic term, but as one expert summarized, “It’s not democracy’s fault, it’s the way we promote it.” The new administration should redefine, or unpack, what it means by democracy to reaffirm it is not defined solely by elections. Democracies are more nuanced: they are slow, complex, and indigenous processes—struggles of self-governance—and include the United States itself today.

Promotion, however, has become synonymous with imposing democracy, with one former senior policymaker dismissing it as, “to use a synonym for stupid, counterproductive” today. Support, rather, conveys the sense that these are indigenous processes that the United States might help. Larry Diamond elaborates that supporting democracy is more modest, realistic, and incremental with greater emphasis on working through partnership, particularly with Europeans already pursuing a similar approach.

To begin to put these principles into practice, the United States should emphasize five pillars for democracy support:

- *Be a model democracy* as the fundamental starting point. Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay, and torture of detainees have harmed the U.S. reputation because they convey the appearance that Washington thinks it is above the law. Resolving these difficult issues through a transparent democratic process is the key to regaining whatever respect and credibility has been lost.
- *Rebuild credibility* by pragmatically and explicitly acknowledging that U.S. strategies, tailored for different countries and regions as well as U.S. interests, will vary. More sophisticated and nuanced declarations about the varying needs of aspiring democratic states and the role for the United States would minimize U.S. vulnerability to the charges of hypocrisy. The United States will be better off acknowledging inevitable inconsistencies and their rationale up front.
- *Enhance political assistance*, which lies at the core of U.S. efforts, to strengthen democracy and good governance abroad. Existing U.S. democracy and governance programs to develop the myriad institutions of democracy in the state, party, and electoral politics and civil society—particularly independent media—should be improved. U.S. programs should be adapted to different actors within diverse countries, sustainably scaled up in larger countries like Indonesia, Nigeria, and Pakistan for the long term, and should operationally shift from determining what indigenous actors need to responding to *their* initiatives and priorities.
- *Use economic assistance* to help consolidate nascent democratic movements, decrease absolute poverty, and reduce corruption. Such efforts, Francis Fukuyama emphasizes, can help democ-

racies deliver on promises made to citizens during political campaigns, enhance democracy's appeal, and bring "freedom from want" as FDR first articulated almost 70 years ago. In this way, economic development can complement U.S. political assistance.

This fundamentally means that democracy should not be conceptually defined by elections, even if they are free and fair. Democratic governments must deliver on what citizens want most, which often means basic social services like education and health care and a higher standard of living. Elections, while important, should not be seen as occasions to end aid to countries or "graduate" them, but to broaden assistance to include economic, governance, rule-of-law, and policy initiatives to deepen and consolidate nascent democracies.

Moreover, formal democracy tends not to work well in countries with high degrees of inequality, when marginalized populations do not feel they have a stake in the system. The long-term stability of democracy and its appeal to other countries depend in large measure on the ability of democratic countries to mitigate, to some extent, unequal distributions of wealth and incomes.

Consistent with the principles of the Millennium Challenge Account, effectively conditioning aid to control corruption, Diamond also stresses, is particularly crucial to addressing one of the greatest deficiencies in democracies today. Corruption is not just another item on the checklist of democratic governance, but is at the heart of how political systems should function, why democracies malfunction when they do, and is the single most important and pervasive reason why states are weak and why they fail.

- *Engage autocratic regimes*—both friendly and adversarial—and their societies, including democratic movements, through diplomatic and other means to facilitate democratic transitions. In friendly autocratic countries—such as Chile, South Korea, and the Philippines—internal political forces historically drove democratization, but McFaul chronicles the American engagement of both the regimes and societies that helped tip the balance in a democratic direction by constraining the unacceptable behavior of incumbent autocrats and encouraging emerging democratic forces.

In adversarial regimes, tension with the United States has historically provided a pretense for greater political oppression. Conversely, benign relations can allow space for indigenous actors to pursue domestic change, as Gorbachev did in the Soviet Union. In rethinking U.S. strategy, the first step should be to expand government-to-government relations. At the same time, the United States should also engage democratic opposition inside autocratic states, which in turn can have greater political space to operate when government relations with the United States are improving.

The consolidation and spread of democracy remains a U.S. strategic interest. Evidence already exists that we are in a global democratic recession, Diamond concludes, and a principal U.S. strategic goal should be to prevent a "reverse wave" of democratic implosions by consolidating democracy where it has already come into being. These five pillars, tailored to different regions and countries, can best do just that. Even with recent setbacks, the problem is not with democracy itself, but with the way the United States has recently been perceived to promote it. The new administration has an opportunity to clarify what it means by democracy and can today better convey patience, humility, cooperation, and pragmatism through a "democracy support" strategy to foster democracy and U.S. strategic interests.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

In addition to conversations with and among the advisory committee, the following people were generous enough to share their time and ideas in interviews for this project, for which we are grateful:

Richard Armitage
Armitage International
Former Deputy Secretary of State

Rick Barton
CSIS
Former Director of the Office of Transition
Initiatives, U.S. Agency for International
Development

Peter Beinart
Council on Foreign Relations

Dennis Blair
National Bureau of Asian Research
Former CINCPAC

R. Nicholas Burns
Harvard University
Former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs

Derek Chollet
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Lorne Craner
International Republican Institute
Former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy,
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Chester Crocker
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Former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs

Patrick Cronin
National Defense University
Former Assistant Administrator, U.S. Agency for
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James Dobbins
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Former Assistant Secretary of State for Europe

Paula Dobriansky
Former Under Secretary of State for Democracy and
Global Affairs

Georges Fauriol
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Michele Flournoy
Center for a New American Security
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Former Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs

Richard Haass
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Former Director of Policy Planning,
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Open Society Policy Center
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Former Chairman, House Committee on Foreign
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François Heisbourg
Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique and
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Strategic Studies

Jim Hoagland
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Former Deputy Prime Minister of Jordan

Walter Russell Mead
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Joseph S. Nye, Jr.
Harvard University
Former Assistant Secretary of Defense

Marc Plattner
Journal of Democracy

Thomas Pickering
Hills & Company
Former Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs

Bruce Russett
Yale University

David Sanger
New York Times

Brent Scowcroft
Scowcroft Group
Former National Security Advisor

James Steinberg
University of Texas at Austin
Former Deputy National Security Advisor

Strobe Talbott
Brookings Institution
Former Deputy Secretary of State

Karsten Voigt
Coordinator for German-American Cooperation,
German Foreign Office

Karin von Hippel
CSIS

Ken Wollack
National Democratic Institute

Fareed Zakaria
Newsweek International and CNN

Philip Zelikow
University of Virginia
Former Counselor, U.S. Department of State



APPENDIX B

ABOUT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Although conversations with and among the advisory committee members improved this project's findings, those findings are the project director's or the chapter author's responsibility alone. Members of the advisory committee are not responsible for, nor do they necessarily agree with, the conclusions drawn in this report.

Thomas Carothers is vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Carothers founded the Endowment's Democracy and Rule of Law Program. He has published numerous books and monographs on this topic including, most recently, "Democracy Promotion during and after Bush" (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2007).

Larry Diamond is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, both at Stanford University. He is also the founding coeditor of the *Journal of Democracy* and codirector of the International Forum for Democratic Studies of the National Endowment for Democracy. His most recent book is *The Spirit of Democracy: The Struggle to Build Free Societies throughout the World* (Times Books, 2008).

Elizabeth Dugan is vice president for Programs of the International Republican Institute (IRI). Prior to returning to IRI, she served as deputy assistant secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor at the U.S. Department of State, where she directed the bureau's Human Rights and Democracy Fund.

Peter D. Feaver is the Alexander F. Hehmeyer Professor of Political Science and Public Policy at Duke University and director of the Triangle Institute for Security Studies. He has also served as a special adviser and director for defense policy and arms control on the National Security Council and is widely credited as having been a principal drafter of the 2006 U.S. national security strategy.

Stephen J. Flanagan is senior vice president at CSIS, where he holds the Henry A. Kissinger Chair in National Security Policy. Flanagan held several senior positions in government between 1989 and 1999, including special assistant to the president and senior director for Central and Eastern Europe on the National Security Council Staff. Flanagan has also received decorations from the presidents of Poland and Romania.

Francis Fukuyama is the Bernard L. Schwartz Professor of International Political Economy at the School of Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University and the director of its International Development program. He is also a member of advisory boards for the National Endowment for Democracy, the *Journal of Democracy*, and chairman of the editorial board of *The American Interest*.

Michael Fullilove is the director of the Global Issues Program at the Lowy Institute for International Policy in Sydney, Australia, and a visiting fellow in foreign policy at the Brookings Institution. His most recent work is *Hope or Glory? The Presidential Election and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Brookings Institution, 2008). He served as an adviser to former Australian prime minister Paul Keating.

Michael J. Green serves as a senior adviser and holds the Japan Chair at CSIS. He is also an associate professor of international relations at Georgetown University. He joined the National Security Council in 2001 as director of Asian affairs and served as special assistant to the president for national security affairs and senior director for Asian affairs from 2004 to 2005.

Robert E. Hunter serves as a senior adviser at the RAND Corporation. He has just completed five years as president of the Atlantic Treaty Association and is chairman of Council on a Community of Democracies. He served as U.S. ambassador to NATO under President Clinton.

Gerald Hyman serves as both a CSIS senior adviser and as president of CSIS's Hills Program on Governance. He also served with the U.S. Agency for International Development from 1990 to 2007 and was director of the Office of Democracy and Governance from 2002 to 2007.

G. John Ikenberry is the Albert G. Milbank Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University. Ikenberry coedited *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts* (Oxford University Press, 2000) and served as a member of an advisory group at the State Department in 2003–2004. He was also the codirector, with Professor Anne-Marie Slaughter, of the Princeton Project on National Security and coauthor of its final report, *Forging a World of Liberty under Law: American National Security in the 21st Century*.

Michael McFaul is the director of the Center on Democracy, Development, and Rule of Law at Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies at Stanford University. He also is the Peter and Helen Bing Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, where he codirects the Iran Democracy Project. He is a nonresident senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. McFaul withdrew from the project on January 19, 2001, before assuming a position in the Obama administration.

Mark Palmer is a member of the Board of Freedom House and served on Secretary Rice's Advisory Committee on Democracy Promotion. He also serves on the boards of the Council for a Community of Democracies, SAIS Johns Hopkins University, and the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy at Georgetown University. He served as U.S. Ambassador to Hungary and co-founded the National Endowment for Democracy.

Rend Al-Rahim is a senior fellow at the United States Institute of Peace. Her current research focuses on the social and political transformation in Iraq in 2003–2005 and on the pressures that affected the outcome of the 2005 elections. She has served as Iraq's representative to the United States and is founder and executive director of the Iraq Foundation.

Mitchell B. Reiss is vice provost for international affairs and professor of law and government at the College of William & Mary. He served as director of the Office of Policy Planning at the U.S.

Department of State from 2003 to 2005 and was appointed in January 2004 by President George W. Bush as special envoy to the Northern Ireland Peace Process with the rank of ambassador.

Anne-Marie Slaughter is dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and Bert G. Kerstetter '66 University Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton University. Her most recent book is *The Idea That Is America: Keeping Faith with Our Values in a Dangerous World* (Basic Books, 2007). She was also the codirector, with Professor G. John Ikenberry, of the Princeton Project on National Security and coauthor of its final report, *Forging a World of Liberty under Law: American National Security in the 21st Century*. She was chairperson of Secretary Rice's Advisory Committee on Democracy Promotion.

Ashley J. Tellis is senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, specializing in international security, defense, and Asian strategic issues. While on assignment to the U.S. Department of State, he was intimately involved in negotiating the civil nuclear agreement with India. He is the research director of the Strategic Asia program at the National Bureau of Asian Research and coeditor of the five most recent annual volumes, including this year's *Strategic Asia 2008–09: Challenges and Choices*. He is the author of *India's Emerging Nuclear Posture* (RAND, 2001) and coauthor of *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy: Past, Present, and Future* (RAND, 2000).

Almut Wieland-Karimi is executive director of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FES) Washington, D.C.. Between 2002 and 2005, she served as director of the FES in Kabul, Afghanistan. Earlier she served in Berlin and Bonn as a desk officer in the FES Middle East department and the Asia department following one year as a project assistant in the FES Office in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Jennifer Windsor is the executive director of Freedom House. She worked at the U.S. Agency for International Development from 1991 to 2001, serving as the deputy assistant administrator and director of the Center for Democracy and Governance. She served on Secretary Rice's Advisory Committee on Democracy Promotion.



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KEY PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHES ON DEMOCRACY

Woodrow Wilson: War Message

April 2, 1917

I have called the Congress into extraordinary session because there are serious, very serious, choices of policy to be made, and made immediately, which it was neither right nor constitutionally permissible that I should assume the responsibility of making.

On the 3rd of February last, I officially laid before you the extraordinary announcement of the Imperial German government that on and after the 1st day of February it was its purpose to put aside all restraints of law or of humanity and use its submarines to sink every vessel that sought to approach either the ports of Great Britain and Ireland or the western coasts of Europe or any of the ports controlled by the enemies of Germany within the Mediterranean.

That had seemed to be the object of the German submarine warfare earlier in the war, but since April of last year the Imperial government had somewhat restrained the commanders of its undersea craft in conformity with its promise then given to us that passenger boats should not be sunk and that due warning would be given to all other vessels which its submarines might seek to destroy, when no resistance was offered or escape attempted, and care taken that their crews were given at least a fair chance to save their lives in their open boats. The precautions taken were meager and haphazard enough, as was proved in distressing instance after instance in the progress of the cruel and unmanly business, but a certain degree of restraint was observed.

The new policy has swept every restriction aside. Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning and without thought of help or mercy for those on board, the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents. Even hospital ships and ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium, though the latter were provided with safe conduct through the proscribed areas by the German government itself and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or of principle.

I was for a little while unable to believe that such things would in fact be done by any government that had hitherto subscribed to the humane practices of civilized nations. International law had its origin in the attempt to set up some law which would be respected and observed upon the seas, where no nation had right of dominion and where lay the free highways of the world. By painful stage after stage has that law been built up, with meager enough results, indeed, after all was accomplished that could be accomplished, but always with a clear view, at least, of what the heart and conscience of mankind demanded.

This minimum of right the German government has swept aside under the plea of retaliation and necessity and because it had no weapons which it could use at sea except these which it is impossible to employ as it is employing them without throwing to the winds all scruples of humanity or of respect for the understandings that were supposed to underlie the intercourse of the world. I am not now thinking of the loss of property involved, immense and serious as that is, but only of the wanton and wholesale destruction of the lives of noncombatants, men, women, and children, engaged in pursuits which have always, even in the darkest periods of modern history, been deemed innocent and legitimate. Property can be paid for; the lives of peaceful and innocent people cannot be.

The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against mankind. It is a war against all nations. American ships have been sunk, American lives taken in ways which it has stirred us very deeply to learn of; but the ships and people of other neutral and friendly nations have been sunk and overwhelmed in the waters in the same way. There has been no discrimination. The challenge is to all mankind.

Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it. The choice we make for ourselves must be made with a moderation of counsel and a temperateness of judgment befitting our character and our motives as a nation. We must put excited feeling away. Our motive will not be revenge or the victorious assertion of the physical might of the nation, but only the vindication of right, of human right, of which we are only a single champion.

When I addressed the Congress on the 26th of February last, I thought that it would suffice to assert our neutral rights with arms, our right to use the seas against unlawful interference, our right to keep our people safe against unlawful violence. But armed neutrality, it now appears, is impracticable. Because submarines are in effect outlaws when used as the German submarines have been used against merchant shipping, it is impossible to defend ships against their attacks as the law of nations has assumed that merchantmen would defend themselves against privateers or cruisers, visible craft giving chase upon the open sea.

It is common prudence in such circumstances, grim necessity indeed, to endeavor to destroy them before they have shown their own intention. They must be dealt with upon sight, if dealt with at all. The German government denies the right of neutrals to use arms at all within the areas of the sea which it has proscribed, even in the defense of rights which no modern publicist has ever before questioned their right to defend. The intimation is conveyed that the armed guards which we have placed on our merchant ships will be treated as beyond the pale of law and subject to be dealt with as pirates would be.

Armed neutrality is ineffectual enough at best; in such circumstances and in the face of such pretensions it is worse than ineffectual: it is likely only to produce what it was meant to prevent; it is practically certain to draw us into the war without either the rights or the effectiveness of belligerents. There is one choice we cannot make, we are incapable of making: we will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored or violated. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life.

With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German government to be in fact nothing less than war against the government and people of the United

States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps, not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the government of the German Empire to terms and end the war.

What this will involve is clear. It will involve the utmost practicable cooperation in counsel and action with the governments now at war with Germany and, as incident to that, the extension to those governments of the most liberal financial credits, in order that our resources may so far as possible be added to theirs. It will involve the organization and mobilization of all the material resources of the country to supply the materials of war and serve the incidental needs of the nation in the most abundant and yet the most economical and efficient way possible. It will involve the immediate full equipment of the Navy in all respects but particularly in supplying it with the best means of dealing with the enemy's submarines. It will involve the immediate addition to the armed forces of the United States already provided for by law in case of war at least 500,000 men, who should, in my opinion, be chosen upon the principle of universal liability to service, and also the authorization of subsequent additional increments of equal force so soon as they may be needed and can be handled in training.

It will involve also, of course, the granting of adequate credits to the government, sustained, I hope, so far as they can equitably be sustained by the present generation, by well-conceived taxation. I say sustained so far as may be equitable by taxation because it seems to me that it would be most unwise to base the credits which will now be necessary entirely on money borrowed. It is our duty, I most respectfully urge, to protect our people so far as we may against the very serious hardships and evils which would be likely to arise out of the inflation which would be produced by vast loans.

In carrying out the measures by which these things are to be accomplished, we should keep constantly in mind the wisdom of interfering as little as possible in our own preparation and in the equipment of our own military forces with the duty--for it will be a very practical duty--of supplying the nations already at war with Germany with the materials which they can obtain only from us or by our assistance. They are in the field and we should help them in every way to be effective there.

I shall take the liberty of suggesting, through the several executive departments of the government, for the consideration of your committees, measures for the accomplishment of the several objects I have mentioned. I hope that it will be your pleasure to deal with them as having been framed after very careful thought by the branch of the government upon which the responsibility of conducting the war and safeguarding the nation will most directly fall.

While we do these things, these deeply momentous things, let us be very clear, and make very clear to all the world, what our motives and our objects are. My own thought has not been driven from its habitual and normal course by the unhappy events of the last two months, and I do not believe that the thought of the nation has been altered or clouded by them. I have exactly the same things in mind now that I had in mind when I addressed the Senate on the 22nd of January last; the same that I had in mind when I addressed the Congress on the 3rd of February and on the 26th of February.

Our object now, as then, is to vindicate the principles of peace and justice in the life of the world as against selfish and autocratic power and to set up among the really free and self-governed peoples of the world such a concert of purpose and of action as will henceforth ensure the

observance of those principles. Neutrality is no longer feasible or desirable where the peace of the world is involved and the freedom of its peoples, and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people. We have seen the last of neutrality in such circumstances. We are at the beginning of an age in which it will be insisted that the same standards of conduct and of responsibility for wrong done shall be observed among nations and their governments that are observed among the individual citizens of civilized states.

We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling toward them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not upon their impulse that their government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old, unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellowmen as pawns and tools.

Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbor states with spies or set the course of intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which will give them an opportunity to strike and make conquest. Such designs can be successfully worked out only under cover and where no one has the right to ask questions. Cunningly contrived plans of deception or aggression, carried, it may be, from generation to generation, can be worked out and kept from the light only within the privacy of courts or behind the carefully guarded confidences of a narrow and privileged class. They are happily impossible where public opinion commands and insists upon full information concerning all the nation's affairs.

A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic government could be trusted to keep faith within it or observe its covenants. It must be a league of honor, a partnership of opinion. Intrigue would eat its vitals away; the plottings of inner circles who could plan what they would and render account to no one would be a corruption seated at its very heart. Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own.

Does not every American feel that assurance has been added to our hope for the future peace of the world by the wonderful and heartening things that have been happening within the last few weeks in Russia? Russia was known by those who knew it best to have been always in fact democratic at heart, in all the vital habits of her thought, in all the intimate relationships of her people that spoke their natural instinct, their habitual attitude toward life. The autocracy that crowned the summit of her political structure, long as it had stood and terrible as was the reality of its power, was not in fact Russian in origin, character, or purpose; and now it has been shaken off and the great, generous Russian people have been added in all their naive majesty and might to the forces that are fighting for freedom in the world, for justice, and for peace. Here is a fit partner for a League of Honor.

One of the things that has served to convince us that the Prussian autocracy was not and could never be our friend is that from the very outset of the present war it has filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of government with spies and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of counsel, our peace within and without, our industries and our commerce. Indeed, it is now evident that its spies were here even before the war began; and it is unhappily not a matter of conjecture but a fact proved in our courts of justice that the intrigues which have more than once come perilously near to disturbing the peace and dislocating the

industries of the country have been carried on at the instigation, with the support, and even under the personal direction of official agents of the Imperial government accredited to the government of the United States.

Even in checking these things and trying to extirpate them, we have sought to put the most generous interpretation possible upon them because we knew that their source lay, not in any hostile feeling or purpose of the German people toward us (who were no doubt as ignorant of them as we ourselves were) but only in the selfish designs of a government that did what it pleased and told its people nothing. But they have played their part in serving to convince us at last that that government entertains no real friendship for us and means to act against our peace and security at its convenience. That it means to stir up enemies against us at our very doors the intercepted note to the German minister at Mexico City is eloquent evidence.

We are accepting this challenge of hostile purpose because we know that in such a government, following such methods, we can never have a friend; and that in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, there can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world. We are now about to accept gage of battle with this natural foe to liberty and shall, if necessary, spend the whole force of the nation to check and nullify its pretensions and its power. We are glad, now that we see the facts with no veil of false pretense about them, to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included: for the rights of nations great and small and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience.

The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them.

Just because we fight without rancor and without selfish object, seeking nothing for ourselves but what we shall wish to share with all free peoples, we shall, I feel confident, conduct our operations as belligerents without passion and ourselves observe with proud punctilio the principles of right and of fair play we profess to be fighting for.

I have said nothing of the governments allied with the Imperial government of Germany because they have not made war upon us or challenged us to defend our right and our honor. The Austro-Hungarian government has, indeed, avowed its unqualified endorsement and acceptance of the reckless and lawless submarine warfare adopted now without disguise by the Imperial German government, and it has therefore not been possible for this government to receive Count Tarnowski, the ambassador recently accredited to this government by the Imperial and Royal government of Austria-Hungary; but that government has not actually engaged in warfare against citizens of the United States on the seas, and I take the liberty, for the present at least, of postponing a discussion of our relations with the authorities at Vienna. We enter this war only where we are clearly forced into it because there are no other means of defending our rights.

It will be all the easier for us to conduct ourselves as belligerents in a high spirit of right and fairness because we act without animus, not in enmity toward a people or with the desire to bring any injury or disadvantage upon them, but only in armed opposition to an irresponsible government which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and of right and is running amuck. We are, let me say again, the sincere friends of the German people, and shall desire nothing so

much as the early reestablishment of intimate relations of mutual advantage between us--however hard it may be for them, for the time being, to believe that this is spoken from our hearts.

We have borne with their present government through all these bitter months because of that friendship--exercising a patience and forbearance which would otherwise have been impossible. We shall, happily, still have an opportunity to prove that friendship in our daily attitude and actions toward the millions of men and women of German birth and native sympathy who live among us and share our life, and we shall be proud to prove it toward all who are in fact loyal to their neighbors and to the government in the hour of test. They are, most of them, as true and loyal Americans as if they had never known any, other fealty or allegiance. They will be prompt to stand with us in rebuking and restraining the few who may be of a different mind and purpose. If there should be disloyalty, it will be dealt with with a firm hand of stern repression; but, if it lifts its head at all, it will lift it only here and there and without countenance except from a lawless and malignant few.

It is a distressing and oppressive duty, gentlemen of the Congress, which I have performed in thus addressing you. There are, it may be, many months of fiery trial and sacrifice ahead of us. It is a fearful, thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in, the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts--for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.

To such a task we can dedicate our lives and our fortunes, everything that we are and everything that we have, with the pride of those who know that the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and her might for the principles that gave her birth and happiness and the peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.

Franklin D. Roosevelt: Annual Address to Congress

January 6, 1941

The “Four Freedoms”: Freedom of speech. Freedom of worship. Freedom from want. Freedom from fear.

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Seventy-seventh Congress:

I address you, the Members of the Seventy-seventh Congress, at a moment unprecedented in the history of the Union. I use the word “unprecedented,” because at no previous time has American security been as seriously threatened from without as it is today.

Since the permanent formation of our Government under the Constitution, in 1789, most of the periods of crisis in our history have related to our domestic affairs. Fortunately, only one of these—the four-year War Between the States—ever threatened our national unity. Today, thank God, one hundred and thirty million Americans, in forty-eight States, have forgotten points of the compass in our national unity.

It is true that prior to 1914 the United States often had been disturbed by events in other Continents. We had even engaged in two wars with European nations and in a number of undeclared wars in the West Indies, in the Mediterranean and in the Pacific for the maintenance of American rights and for the principles of peaceful commerce. But in no case had a serious threat been raised against our national safety or our continued independence.

What I seek to convey is the historic truth that the United States as a nation has at all times maintained clear, definite opposition, to any attempt to lock us in behind an ancient Chinese wall while the procession of civilization went past. Today, thinking of our children and of their children, we oppose enforced isolation for ourselves or for any other part of the Americas.

That determination of ours, extending over all these years, was proved, for example, during the quarter century of wars following the French Revolution.

While the Napoleonic struggles did threaten interests of the United States because of the French foothold in the West Indies and in Louisiana, and while we engaged in the War of 1812 to vindicate our right to peaceful trade, it is nevertheless clear that neither France nor Great Britain, nor any other nation, was aiming at domination of the whole world.

In like fashion from 1815 to 1914— ninety-nine years— no single war in Europe or in Asia constituted a real threat against our future or against the future of any other American nation.

Except in the Maximilian interlude in Mexico, no foreign power sought to establish itself in this Hemisphere; and the strength of the British fleet in the Atlantic has been a friendly strength. It is still a friendly strength.

Even when the World War broke out in 1914, it seemed to contain only small threat of danger to our own American future. But, as time went on, the American people began to visualize what the downfall of democratic nations might mean to our own democracy.

We need not overemphasize imperfections in the Peace of Versailles. We need not harp on failure of the democracies to deal with problems of world reconstruction. We should remember

that the Peace of 1919 was far less unjust than the kind of “pacification” which began even before Munich, and which is being carried on under the new order of tyranny that seeks to spread over every continent today. The American people have unalterably set their faces against that tyranny.

Every realist knows that the democratic way of life is at this moment being’ directly assailed in every part of the world—assailed either by arms, or by secret spreading of poisonous propaganda by those who seek to destroy unity and promote discord in nations that are still at peace.

During sixteen long months this assault has blotted out the whole pattern of democratic life in an appalling number of independent nations, great and small. The assailants are still on the march, threatening other nations, great and small.

Therefore, as your President, performing my constitutional duty to “give to the Congress information of the state of the Union,” I find it, unhappily, necessary to report that the future and the safety of our country and of our democracy are overwhelmingly involved in events far beyond our borders.

Armed defense of democratic existence is now being gallantly waged in four continents. If that defense fails, all the population and all the resources of Europe, Asia, Africa and Australasia will be dominated by the conquerors. Let us remember that the total of those populations and their resources in those four continents greatly exceeds the sum total of the population and the resources of the whole of the Western Hemisphere-many times over.

In times like these it is immature—and incidentally, untrue—for anybody to brag that an unprepared America, single-handed, and with one hand tied behind its back, can hold off the whole world.

No realistic American can expect from a dictator’s peace international generosity, or return of true independence, or world disarmament, or freedom of expression, or freedom of religion -or even good business.

Such a peace would bring no security for us or for our neighbors. “Those, who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety.”

As a nation, we may take pride in the fact that we are softhearted; but we cannot afford to be soft-headed.

We must always be wary of those who with sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal preach the “ism” of appeasement.

We must especially beware of that small group of selfish men who would clip the wings of the American eagle in order to feather their own nests.

I have recently pointed out how quickly the tempo of modern warfare could bring into our very midst the physical attack which we must eventually expect if the dictator nations win this war.

There is much loose talk of our immunity from immediate and direct invasion from across the seas. Obviously, as long as the British Navy retains its power, no such danger exists. Even if there were no British Navy, it is not probable that any enemy would be stupid enough to attack us by landing troops in the United States from across thousands of miles of ocean, until it had acquired strategic bases from which to operate.

But we learn much from the lessons of the past years in Europe-particularly the lesson of Norway, whose essential seaports were captured by treachery and surprise built up over a series of years.

The first phase of the invasion of this Hemisphere would not be the landing of regular troops. The necessary strategic points would be occupied by secret agents and their dupes— and great numbers of them are already here, and in Latin America.

As long as the aggressor nations maintain the offensive, they—not we—will choose the time and the place and the method of their attack.

That is why the future of all the American Republics is today in serious danger.

That is why this Annual Message to the Congress is unique in our history.

That is why every member of the Executive Branch of the Government and every member of the Congress faces great responsibility and great accountability.

The need of the moment is that our actions and our policy should be devoted primarily—almost exclusively—to meeting this foreign peril. For all our domestic problems are now a part of the great emergency.

Just as our national policy in internal affairs has been based upon a decent respect for the rights and the dignity of all our fellow men within our gates, so our national policy in foreign affairs has been based on a decent respect for the rights and dignity of all nations, large and small. And the justice of morality must and will win in the end.

Our national policy is this:

First, by an impressive expression of the public will and without regard to partisanship, we are committed to all-inclusive national defense.

Second, by an impressive expression of the public will and without regard to partisanship, we are committed to full support of all those resolute peoples, everywhere, who are resisting aggression and are thereby keeping war away from our Hemisphere. By this support, we express our determination that the democratic cause shall prevail; and we strengthen the defense and the security of our own nation.

Third, by an impressive expression of the public will and without regard to partisanship, we are committed to the proposition that principles of morality and considerations for our own security will never permit us to acquiesce in a peace dictated by aggressors and sponsored by appeasers. We know that enduring peace cannot be bought at the cost of other people's freedom.

In the recent national election there was no substantial difference between the two great parties in respect to that national policy. No issue was fought out on this line before the American electorate. Today it is abundantly evident that American citizens everywhere are demanding and supporting speedy and complete action in recognition of obvious danger.

Therefore, the immediate need is a swift and driving increase in our armament production.

Leaders of industry and labor have responded to our summons. Goals of speed have been set. In some cases these goals are being reached ahead of time; in some cases we are on schedule; in other cases there are slight but not serious delays; and in some cases—and I am sorry to say very important cases—we are all concerned by the slowness of the accomplishment of our plans.

The Army and Navy, however, have made substantial progress during the past year. Actual experience is improving and speeding up our methods of production with every passing day. And today's best is not good enough for tomorrow.

I am not satisfied with the progress thus far made. The men in charge of the program represent the best in training, in ability, and in patriotism. They are not satisfied with the progress thus far made. None of us will be satisfied until the job is done.

No matter whether the original goal was set too high or too low, our objective is quicker and better results. To give you two illustrations:

We are behind schedule in turning out finished airplanes; we are working day and night to solve the innumerable problems and to catch up.

We are ahead of schedule in building warships but we are working to get even further ahead of that schedule.

To change a whole nation from a basis of peacetime production of implements of peace to a basis of wartime production of implements of war is no small task. And the greatest difficulty comes at the beginning of the program, when new tools, new plant facilities, new assembly lines, and new ship ways must first be constructed before the actual materiel begins to flow steadily and speedily from them.

The Congress, of course, must rightly keep itself informed at all times of the progress of the program. However, there is certain information, as the Congress itself will readily recognize, which, in the interests of our own security and those of the nations that we are supporting, must of needs be kept in confidence.

New circumstances are constantly begetting new needs for our safety. I shall ask this Congress for greatly increased new appropriations and authorizations to carry on what we have begun.

I also ask this Congress for authority and for funds sufficient to manufacture additional munitions and war supplies of many kinds, to be turned over to those nations which are now in actual war with aggressor nations.

Our most useful and immediate role is to act as an arsenal for them as well as for ourselves. They do not need man power, but they do need billions of dollars worth of the weapons of defense.

The time is near when they will not be able to pay for them all in ready cash. We cannot, and we will not, tell them that they must surrender, merely because of present inability to pay for the weapons which we know they must have.

I do not recommend that we make them a loan of dollars with which to pay for these weapons—a loan to be repaid in dollars.

I recommend that we make it possible for those nations to continue to obtain war materials in the United States, fitting their orders into our own program. Nearly all their materiel would, if the time ever came, be useful for our own defense.

Taking counsel of expert military and naval authorities, considering what is best for our own security, we are free to decide how much should be kept here and how much should be sent abroad to our friends who by their determined and heroic resistance are giving us time in which to make ready our own defense.

For what we send abroad, we shall be repaid within a reasonable time following the close of hostilities, in similar materials, or, at our option, in other goods of many kinds, which they can produce and which we need.

Let us say to the democracies: “We Americans are vitally concerned in your defense of freedom. We are putting forth our energies, our resources and our organizing powers to give you the strength to regain and maintain a free world. We shall send you, in ever-increasing numbers, ships, planes, tanks, guns. This is our purpose and our pledge.”

In fulfillment of this purpose we will not be intimidated by the threats of dictators that they will regard as a breach of international law or as an act of war our aid to the democracies which dare to resist their aggression. Such aid is not an act of war, even if a dictator should unilaterally proclaim it so to be.

When the dictators, if the dictators, are ready to make war upon us, they will not wait for an act of war on our part. They did not wait for Norway or Belgium or the Netherlands to commit an act of war.

Their only interest is in a new one-way international law, which lacks mutuality in its observance, and, therefore, becomes an instrument of oppression.

The happiness of future generations of Americans may well depend upon how effective and how immediate we can make our aid felt. No one can tell the exact character of the emergency situations that we may be called upon to meet. The Nation’s hands must not be tied when the Nation’s life is in danger.

We must all prepare to make the sacrifices that the emergency—almost as serious as war itself—demands. Whatever stands in the way of speed and efficiency in defense preparations must give way to the national need.

A free nation has the right to expect full cooperation from all groups. A free nation has the right to look to the leaders of business, of labor, and of agriculture to take the lead in stimulating effort, not among other groups but within their own groups.

The best way of dealing with the few slackers or trouble makers in our midst is, first, to shame them by patriotic example, and, if that fails, to use the sovereignty of Government to save Government.

As men do not live by bread alone, they do not fight by armaments alone. Those who man our defenses, and those behind them who build our defenses, must have the stamina and the courage which come from unshakable belief in the manner of life which they are defending. The mighty action that we are calling for cannot be based on a disregard of all things worth fighting for.

The Nation takes great satisfaction and much strength from the things which have been done to make its people conscious of their individual stake in the preservation of democratic life in America. Those things have toughened the fibre of our people, have renewed their faith and strengthened their devotion to the institutions we make ready to protect.

Certainly this is no time for any of us to stop thinking about the social and economic problems which are the root cause of the social revolution which is today a supreme factor in the world.

For there is nothing mysterious about the foundations of a healthy and strong democracy. The basic things expected by our people of their political and economic systems are simple. They are:

Equality of opportunity for youth and for others.

Jobs for those who can work.

Security for those who need it.
The ending of special privilege for the few.
The preservation of civil liberties for all.

The enjoyment of the fruits of scientific progress in a wider and constantly rising standard of living.

These are the simple, basic things that must never be lost sight of in the turmoil and unbelievable complexity of our modern world. The inner and abiding strength of our economic and political systems is dependent upon the degree to which they fulfill these expectations.

Many subjects connected with our social economy call for immediate improvement.

As examples:

We should bring more citizens under the coverage of old-age pensions and unemployment insurance.

We should widen the opportunities for adequate medical care.

We should plan a better system by which persons deserving or needing gainful employment may obtain it.

I have called for personal sacrifice. I am assured of the willingness of almost all Americans to respond to that call.

A part of the sacrifice means the payment of more money in taxes. In my Budget Message I shall recommend that a greater portion of this great defense program be paid for from taxation than we are paying today. No person should try, or be allowed, to get rich out of this program; and the principle of tax payments in accordance with ability to pay should be constantly before our eyes to guide our legislation.

If the Congress maintains these principles, the voters, putting patriotism ahead of pocket-books, will give you their applause.

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want—which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.

That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation. That kind of world is the very antithesis of the so-called new order of tyranny which the dictators seek to create with the crash of a bomb.

To that new order we oppose the greater conception—the moral order. A good society is able to face schemes of world domination and foreign revolutions alike without fear.

Since the beginning of our American history, we have been engaged in change—in a perpetual peaceful revolution—a revolution which goes on steadily, quietly adjusting itself to changing conditions—without the concentration camp or the quick-lime in the ditch. The world order which we seek is the cooperation of free countries, working together in a friendly, civilized society.

This nation has placed its destiny in the hands and heads and hearts of its millions of free men and women; and its faith in freedom under the guidance of God. Freedom means the supremacy of human rights everywhere. Our support goes to those who struggle to gain those rights or keep them. Our strength is our unity of purpose. To that high concept there can be no end save victory.

Ronald Reagan: Promoting Democracy and Peace

Speech to the British Parliament, June 8, 1982

My Lord Chancellor, Mr. Speaker:

The journey of which this visit forms a part is a long one. Already it has taken me to two great cities of the West, Rome and Paris, and to the economic summit at Versailles. And there, once again, our sister democracies have proved that even in a time of severe economic strain, free peoples can work together freely and voluntarily to address problems as serious as inflation, unemployment, trade, and economic development in a spirit of cooperation and solidarity.

Other milestones lie ahead. Later this week, in Germany, we and our NATO allies will discuss measures for our joint defense and America's latest initiatives for a more peaceful, secure world through arms reductions.

Each stop of this trip is important, but among them all, this moment occupies a special place in my heart and in the hearts of my countrymen—a moment of kinship and homecoming in these hallowed halls.

Speaking for all Americans, I want to say how very much at home we feel in your house. Every American would, because this is, as we have been so eloquently told, one of democracy's shrines. Here the rights of free people and the processes of representation have been debated and refined.

It has been said that an institution is the lengthening shadow of a man. This institution is the lengthening shadow of all the men and women who have sat here and all those who have voted to send representatives here.

This is my second visit to Great Britain as President of the United States. My first opportunity to stand on British soil occurred almost a year and a half ago when your Prime Minister graciously hosted a diplomatic dinner at the British Embassy in Washington. Mrs. Thatcher said then that she hoped I was not distressed to find staring down at me from the grand staircase a portrait of His Royal Majesty King George III. She suggested it was best to let bygones be bygones, and in view of our two countries' remarkable friendship in succeeding years, she added that most Englishmen today would agree with Thomas Jefferson that "a little rebellion now and then is a very good thing."

Well, from here I will go to Bonn and then Berlin, where there stands a grim symbol of power untamed. The Berlin Wall, that dreadful gray gash across the city, is in its third decade. It is the fitting signature of the regime that built it.

And a few hundred kilometers behind the Berlin Wall, there is another symbol. In the center of Warsaw, there is a sign that notes the distances to two capitals. In one direction it points toward Moscow. In the other it points toward Brussels, headquarters of Western Europe's tangible unity. The marker says that the distances from Warsaw to Moscow and Warsaw to Brussels are equal. The sign makes this point: Poland is not East or West. Poland is at the center of European civilization. It has contributed mightily to that civilization. It is doing so today by being magnificently unrec-
onciled to oppression.

Poland's struggle to be Poland and to secure the basic rights we often take for granted demonstrates why we dare not take those rights for granted. Gladstone, defending the Reform Bill of 1866, declared, "You cannot fight against the future. Time is on our side." It was

easier to believe in the march of democracy in Gladstone's day—in that high noon of Victorian optimism.

We're approaching the end of a bloody century plagued by a terrible political invention—totalitarianism. Optimism comes less easily today, not because democracy is less vigorous, but because democracy's enemies have refined their instruments of repression. Yet optimism is in order, because day by day democracy is proving itself to be a not-at-all-fragile flower. From Stettin on the Baltic to Varna on the Black Sea, the regimes planted by totalitarianism have had more than 30 years to establish their legitimacy. But none—not one regime—has yet been able to risk free elections. Regimes planted by bayonets do not take root.

The strength of the Solidarity movement in Poland demonstrates the truth told in an underground joke in the Soviet Union. It is that the Soviet Union would remain a one-party nation even if an opposition party were permitted, because everyone would join the opposition party. America's time as a player on the stage of world history has been brief. I think understanding this fact has always made you patient with your younger cousins—well, not always patient. I do recall that on one occasion, Sir Winston Churchill said in exasperation about one of our most distinguished diplomats: "He is the only case I know of a bull who carries his china shop with him."

But witty as Sir Winston was, he also had that special attribute of great statesmen—the gift of vision, the willingness to see the future based on the experience of the past. It is this sense of history, this understanding of the past that I want to talk with you about today, for it is in remembering what we share of the past that our two nations can make common cause for the future.

We have not inherited an easy world. If developments like the Industrial Revolution, which began here in England, and the gifts of science and technology have made life much easier for us, they have also made it more dangerous. There are threats now to our freedom, indeed to our very existence, that other generations could never even have imagined.

There is first the threat of global war. No President, no Congress, no Prime Minister, no Parliament can spend a day entirely free of this threat. And I don't have to tell you that in today's world the existence of nuclear weapons could mean, if not the extinction of mankind, then surely the end of civilization as we know it. That's why negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear forces now underway in Europe and the START talks—Strategic Arms Reduction Talks—which will begin later this month, are not just critical to American or Western policy; they are critical to mankind. Our commitment to early success in these negotiations is firm and unshakable, and our purpose is clear: reducing the risk of war by reducing the means of waging war on both sides.

At the same time there is a threat posed to human freedom by the enormous power of the modern state. History teaches the dangers of government that overreaches—political control taking precedence over free economic growth, secret police, mindless bureaucracy, all combining to stifle individual excellence and personal freedom.

Now, I'm aware that among us here and throughout Europe there is legitimate disagreement over the extent to which the public sector should play a role in a nation's economy and life. But on one point all of us are united—our abhorrence of dictatorship in all its forms, but most particularly totalitarianism and the terrible inhumanities it has caused in our time—the great purge, Auschwitz and Dachau, the Gulag, and Cambodia.

Historians looking back at our time will note the consistent restraint and peaceful intentions of the West. They will note that it was the democracies who refused to use the threat of

their nuclear monopoly in the forties and early fifties for territorial or imperial gain. Had that nuclear monopoly been in the hands of the Communist world, the map of Europe—indeed, the world—would look very different today. And certainly they will note it was not the democracies that invaded Afghanistan or suppressed Polish Solidarity or used chemical and toxin warfare in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia.

If history teaches anything it teaches self-delusion in the face of unpleasant facts is folly. We see around us today the marks of our terrible dilemma—predictions of doomsday, antinuclear demonstrations, an arms race in which the West must, for its own protection, be an unwilling participant. At the same time we see totalitarian forces in the world who seek subversion and conflict around the globe to further their barbarous assault on the human spirit. What, then, is our course? Must civilization perish in a hail of fiery atoms? Must freedom wither in a quiet, deadening accommodation with totalitarian evil?

Sir Winston Churchill refused to accept the inevitability of war or even that it was imminent. He said, “I do not believe that Soviet Russia desires war. What they desire is the fruits of war and the indefinite expansion of their power and doctrines. But what we have to consider here today while time remains is the permanent prevention of war and the establishment of conditions of freedom and democracy as rapidly as possible in all countries.”

Well, this is precisely our mission today: to preserve freedom as well as peace. It may not be easy to see; but I believe we live now at a turning point.

In an ironic sense Karl Marx was right. We are witnessing today a great revolutionary crisis, a crisis where the demands of the economic order are conflicting directly with those of the political order. But the crisis is happening not in the free, non-Marxist West, but in the home of Marxist-Leninism, the Soviet Union. It is the Soviet Union that runs against the tide of history by denying human freedom and human dignity to its citizens. It also is in deep economic difficulty. The rate of growth in the national product has been steadily declining since the fifties and is less than half of what it was then.

The dimensions of this failure are astounding: A country which employs one-fifth of its population in agriculture is unable to feed its own people. Were it not for the private sector, the tiny private sector tolerated in Soviet agriculture, the country might be on the brink of famine. These private plots occupy a bare three percent of the arable land but account for nearly one-quarter of Soviet farm output and nearly one-third of meat products and vegetables. Over centralized, with little or no incentives, year after year the Soviet system pours its best resource into the making of instruments of destruction. The constant shrinkage of economic growth combined with the growth of military production is putting a heavy strain on the Soviet people. What we see here is a political structure that no longer corresponds to its economic base, a society where productive forces are hampered by political ones.

The decay of the Soviet experiment should come as no surprise to us. Wherever the comparisons have been made between free and closed societies—West Germany and East Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia, Malaysia and Vietnam—it is the democratic countries what are prosperous and responsive to the needs of their people. And one of the simple but overwhelming facts of our time is this: Of all the millions of refugees we’ve seen in the modern world, their flight is always away from, not toward the Communist world. Today on the NATO line, our military forces face east to prevent a possible invasion. On the other side of the line, the Soviet forces also face east to prevent their people from leaving.

The hard evidence of totalitarian rule has caused in mankind an uprising of the intellect and will. Whether it is the growth of the new schools of economics in America or England or the appearance of the so-called new philosophers in France, there is one unifying thread running through the intellectual work of these groups—rejection of the arbitrary power of the state, the refusal to subordinate the rights of the individual to the superstate, the realization that collectivism stifles all the best human impulses.

Since the exodus from Egypt, historians have written of those who sacrificed and struggled for freedom—the stand at Thermopylae, the revolt of Spartacus, the storming of the Bastille, the Warsaw uprising in World War II. More recently we've seen evidence of this same human impulse in one of the developing nations in Central America. For months and months the world news media covered the fighting in El Salvador. Day after day we were treated to stories and film slanted toward the brave freedom-fighters battling oppressive government forces in behalf of the silent, suffering people of that tortured country.

And then one day those silent, suffering people were offered a chance to vote, to choose the kind of government they wanted. Suddenly the freedom-fighters in the hills were exposed for what they really are—Cuban-backed guerrillas who want power for themselves, and their backers, not democracy for the people. They threatened death to any who voted, and destroyed hundreds of buses and trucks to keep the people from getting to the polling places. But on election day, the people of El Salvador, an unprecedented 1.4 million of them, braved ambush and gunfire, and trudged for miles to vote for freedom.

They stood for hours in the hot sun waiting for their turn to vote. Members of our Congress who went there as observers told me of a woman who was wounded by rifle fire on the way to the polls, who refused to leave the line to have her wound treated until after she had voted. A grandmother, who had been told by the guerrillas she would be killed when she returned from the polls, and she told the guerrillas, "You can kill me, you can kill my family, kill my neighbors, but you can't kill us all." The real freedom-fighters of El Salvador turned out to be the people of that country—the young, the old, the in-between.

Strange, but in my own country there's been little if any news coverage of that war since the election. Now, perhaps they'll say it's—well, because there are newer struggles now.

On distant islands in the South Atlantic young men are fighting for Britain. And, yes, voices have been raised protesting their sacrifice for lumps of rock and earth so far away. But those young men aren't fighting for mere real estate. They fight for a cause—for the belief that armed aggression must not be allowed to succeed, and the people must participate in the decisions of government—the decisions of government under the rule of law. If there had been firmer support for that principle some 45 years ago, perhaps our generation wouldn't have suffered the bloodletting of World War II.

In the Middle East now the guns sound once more, this time in Lebanon, a country that for too long has had to endure the tragedy of civil war, terrorism, and foreign intervention and occupation. The fighting in Lebanon on the part of all parties must stop, and Israel should bring its forces home. But this is not enough. We must all work to stamp out the scourge of terrorism that in the Middle East makes war an ever-present threat.

But beyond the trouble spots lies a deeper, more positive pattern. Around the world today, the democratic revolution is gathering new strength. In India a critical test has been passed with the

peaceful change of governing political parties. In Africa, Nigeria is moving into remarkable and unmistakable ways to build and strengthen its democratic institutions. In the Caribbean and Central America, 16 of 24 countries have freely elected governments. And in the United Nations, eight of the 10 developing nations which have joined that body in the past five years are democracies.

In the Communist world as well, man's instinctive desire for freedom and self-determination surfaces again and again. To be sure, there are grim reminders of how brutally the police state attempts to snuff out this quest for self-rule—1953 in East Germany, 1956 in Hungary, 1968 in Czechoslovakia, 1981 in Poland. But the struggle continues in Poland. And we know that there are even those who strive and suffer for freedom within the confines of the Soviet Union itself. How we conduct ourselves here in the Western democracies will determine whether this trend continues.

No, democracy is not a fragile flower. Still it needs cultivating. If the rest of this century is to witness the gradual growth of freedom and democratic ideals, we must take actions to assist the campaign for democracy.

Some argue that we should encourage democratic change in right-wing dictatorships, but not in Communist regimes. Well, to accept this preposterous notion—as some well-meaning people have—is to invite the argument that once countries achieve a nuclear capability, they should be allowed an undisturbed reign of terror over their own citizens. We reject this course.

As for the Soviet view, Chairman Brezhnev repeatedly has stressed that the competition of ideas and systems must continue and that this is entirely consistent with relaxation of tensions and peace.

Well, we ask only that these systems begin by living up to their own constitutions, abiding by their own laws, and complying with the international obligations they have undertaken. We ask only for a process, a direction, a basic code of decency, not for an instant transformation.

We cannot ignore the fact that even without our encouragement there has been and will continue to be repeated explosions against repression and dictatorships. The Soviet Union itself is not immune to this reality. Any system is inherently unstable that has no peaceful means to legitimize its leaders. In such cases, the very repressiveness of the state ultimately drives people to resist it, if necessary, by force.

While we must be cautious about forcing the pace of change, we must not hesitate to declare our ultimate objectives and to take concrete actions to move toward them. We must be staunch in our conviction that freedom is not the sole prerogative of a lucky few, but the inalienable and universal right of all human beings. So states the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which, among other things, guarantees free elections.

The objective I propose is quite simple to state: to foster the infrastructure of democracy, the system of a free press, unions, political parties, universities, which allows a people to choose their own way to develop their own culture, to reconcile their own differences through peaceful means.

This is not cultural imperialism, it is providing the means for genuine self-determination and protection for diversity. Democracy already flourishes in countries with very different cultures and historical experiences. It would be cultural condescension, or worse, to say that any people prefer dictatorship to democracy. Who would voluntarily choose not to have the right to vote, decide to purchase government propaganda handouts instead of independent newspapers, prefer government to worker-controlled unions, opt for land to be owned by the state instead of those who till

it, want government repression of religious liberty, a single political party instead of a free choice, a rigid cultural orthodoxy instead of democratic tolerance and diversity?

Since 1917 the Soviet Union has given covert political training and assistance to Marxist-Leninists in many countries. Of course, it also has promoted the use of violence and subversion by these same forces. Over the past several decades, West European and other Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, and leaders have offered open assistance to fraternal, political, and social institutions to bring about peaceful and democratic progress. Appropriately, for a vigorous new democracy, the Federal Republic of Germany's political foundations have become a major force in this effort.

We in America now intend to take additional steps, as many of our allies have already done, toward realizing this same goal. The chairmen and other leaders of the national Republican and Democratic Party organizations are initiating a study with the bipartisan American political foundation to determine how the United States can best contribute as a nation to the global campaign for democracy now gathering force. They will have the cooperation of congressional leaders of both parties, along with representatives of business, labor, and other major institutions in our society. I look forward to receiving their recommendations and to working with these institutions and the Congress in the common task of strengthening democracy throughout the world.

It is time that we committed ourselves as a nation—in both the public and private sectors—to assisting democratic development.

We plan to consult with leaders of other nations as well. There is a proposal before the Council of Europe to invite parliamentarians from democratic countries to a meeting next year in Strasbourg. That prestigious gathering could consider ways to help democratic political movements.

This November in Washington there will take place an international meeting on free elections. And next spring there will be a conference of world authorities on constitutionalism and self-government hosted by the Chief Justice of the United States. Authorities from a number of developing and developed countries—judges, philosophers, and politicians with practical experience—have agreed to explore how to turn principle into practice and further the rule of law.

At the same time, we invite the Soviet Union to consider with us how the competition of ideas and values—which it is committed to support—can be conducted on a peaceful and reciprocal basis. For example, I am prepared to offer President Brezhnev an opportunity to speak to the American people on our television if he will allow me the same opportunity with the Soviet people. We also suggest that panels of our newsmen periodically appear on each other's television to discuss major events.

Now, I don't wish to sound overly optimistic, yet the Soviet Union is not immune from the reality of what is going on in the world. It has happened in the past—a small ruling elite either mistakenly attempts to ease domestic unrest through greater repression and foreign adventure, or it chooses a wiser course. It begins to allow its people a voice in their own destiny. Even if this latter process is not realized soon, I believe the renewed strength of the democratic movement, complemented by a global campaign for freedom, will strengthen the prospects for arms control and a world at peace.

I have discussed on other occasions, including my address on May 9, the elements of Western policies toward the Soviet Union to safeguard our interests and protect the peace. What I am describing now is a plan and a hope for the long term—the march of freedom and democracy

which will leave Marxism-Leninism on the ash-heap of history as it has left other tyrannies which stifle the freedom and muzzle the self-expression of the people. And that's why we must continue our efforts to strengthen NATO even as we move forward with our Zero-Option initiative in the negotiations on intermediate-range forces and our proposal for a one-third reduction in strategic ballistic missile warheads.

Our military strength is a prerequisite to peace, but let it be clear we maintain this strength in the hope it will never be used, for the ultimate determinant in the struggle that's now going on in the world will not be bombs and rockets, but a test of wills and ideas, a trial of spiritual resolve, the values we hold, the beliefs we cherish, the ideals to which we are dedicated.

The British people know that, given strong leadership, time and a little bit of hope, the forces of good ultimately rally and triumph over evil. Here among you is the cradle of self-government, the Mother of Parliaments. Here is the enduring greatness of the British contribution to mankind, the great civilized ideas: individual liberty, representative government, and the rule of law under God.

I've often wondered about the shyness of some of us in the West about standing for these ideals that have done so much to ease the plight of man and the hardships of our imperfect world. This reluctance to use those vast resources at our command reminds me of the elderly lady whose home was bombed in the Blitz. As the rescuers moved about, they found a bottle of brandy she'd stored behind the staircase, which was all that was left standing. And since she was barely conscious, one of the workers pulled the cork to give her a taste of it. She came around immediately and said, "Here now—there now, put it back. That's for emergencies."

Well, the emergency is upon us. Let us be shy no longer. Let us go to our strength. Let us offer hope. Let us tell the world that a new age is not only possible but probable.

During the dark days of the Second World War, when this island was incandescent with courage, Winston Churchill exclaimed about Britain's adversaries, "What kind of a people do they think we are?" Well, Britain's adversaries found out what extraordinary people the British are. But all the democracies paid a terrible price for allowing the dictators to underestimate us. We dare not make that mistake again. So, let us ask ourselves, "What kind of people do we think we are?" And let us answer, "Free people, worthy of freedom and determined not only to remain so but to help others gain their freedom as well."

Sir Winston led his people to great victory in war and then lost an election just as the fruits of victory were about to be enjoyed. But he left office honorably, and, as it turned out, temporarily, knowing that the liberty of his people was more important than the fate of any single leader. History recalls his greatness in ways no dictator will ever know. And he left us a message of hope for the future, as timely now as when he first uttered it, as opposition leader in the Commons nearly 27 years ago, when he said, "When we look back on all the perils through which we have passed and at the mighty foes that we have laid low and all the dark and deadly designs that we have frustrated, why should we fear for our future? We have," he said, "come safely through the worst."

Well, the task I've set forth will long outlive our own generation. But together, we too have come through the worst. Let us now begin a major effort to secure the best—a crusade for freedom that will engage the faith and fortitude of the next generation. For the sake of peace and justice, let us move toward a world in which all people are at last free to determine their own destiny.

Thank you.

George W. Bush: Second Inaugural Address

January 20, 2005

Vice President Cheney, Mr. Chief Justice, President Carter, President Bush, President Clinton, reverend clergy, distinguished guests, fellow citizens:

On this day, prescribed by law and marked by ceremony, we celebrate the durable wisdom of our Constitution, and recall the deep commitments that unite our country. I am grateful for the honor of this hour, mindful of the consequential times in which we live, and determined to fulfill the oath that I have sworn and you have witnessed.

At this second gathering, our duties are defined not by the words I use, but by the history we have seen together. For a half century, America defended our own freedom by standing watch on distant borders. After the shipwreck of communism came years of relative quiet, years of repose, years of sabbatical—and then there came a day of fire.

We have seen our vulnerability—and we have seen its deepest source. For as long as whole regions of the world simmer in resentment and tyranny—prone to ideologies that feed hatred and excuse murder—violence will gather, and multiply in destructive power, and cross the most defended borders, and raise a mortal threat. There is only one force of history that can break the reign of hatred and resentment, and expose the pretensions of tyrants, and reward the hopes of the decent and tolerant, and that is the force of human freedom.

We are led, by events and common sense, to one conclusion: The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world.

America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one. From the day of our Founding, we have proclaimed that every man and woman on this earth has rights, and dignity, and matchless value, because they bear the image of the Maker of Heaven and earth. Across the generations we have proclaimed the imperative of self-government, because no one is fit to be a master, and no one deserves to be a slave. Advancing these ideals is the mission that created our Nation. It is the honorable achievement of our fathers. Now it is the urgent requirement of our nation's security, and the calling of our time.

So it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.

This is not primarily the task of arms, though we will defend ourselves and our friends by force of arms when necessary. Freedom, by its nature, must be chosen, and defended by citizens, and sustained by the rule of law and the protection of minorities. And when the soul of a nation finally speaks, the institutions that arise may reflect customs and traditions very different from our own. America will not impose our own style of government on the unwilling. Our goal instead is to help others find their own voice, attain their own freedom, and make their own way.

The great objective of ending tyranny is the concentrated work of generations. The difficulty of the task is no excuse for avoiding it. America's influence is not unlimited, but fortunately for the oppressed, America's influence is considerable, and we will use it confidently in freedom's cause.

My most solemn duty is to protect this nation and its people against further attacks and emerging threats. Some have unwisely chosen to test America's resolve, and have found it firm.

We will persistently clarify the choice before every ruler and every nation: The moral choice between oppression, which is always wrong, and freedom, which is eternally right. America will not pretend that jailed dissidents prefer their chains, or that women welcome humiliation and servitude, or that any human being aspires to live at the mercy of bullies.

We will encourage reform in other governments by making clear that success in our relations will require the decent treatment of their own people. America's belief in human dignity will guide our policies, yet rights must be more than the grudging concessions of dictators; they are secured by free dissent and the participation of the governed. In the long run, there is no justice without freedom, and there can be no human rights without human liberty.

Some, I know, have questioned the global appeal of liberty—though this time in history, four decades defined by the swiftest advance of freedom ever seen, is an odd time for doubt. Americans, of all people, should never be surprised by the power of our ideals. Eventually, the call of freedom comes to every mind and every soul. We do not accept the existence of permanent tyranny because we do not accept the possibility of permanent slavery. Liberty will come to those who love it.

Today, America speaks anew to the peoples of the world:

All who live in tyranny and hopelessness can know: the United States will not ignore your oppression, or excuse your oppressors. When you stand for your liberty, we will stand with you.

Democratic reformers facing repression, prison, or exile can know: America sees you for who you are: the future leaders of your free country.

The rulers of outlaw regimes can know that we still believe as Abraham Lincoln did: "Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves; and, under the rule of a just God, cannot long retain it."

The leaders of governments with long habits of control need to know: To serve your people you must learn to trust them. Start on this journey of progress and justice, and America will walk at your side.

And all the allies of the United States can know: we honor your friendship, we rely on your counsel, and we depend on your help. Division among free nations is a primary goal of freedom's enemies. The concerted effort of free nations to promote democracy is a prelude to our enemies' defeat.

Today, I also speak anew to my fellow citizens:

From all of you, I have asked patience in the hard task of securing America, which you have granted in good measure. Our country has accepted obligations that are difficult to fulfill, and would be dishonorable to abandon. Yet because we have acted in the great liberating tradition of this nation, tens of millions have achieved their freedom. And as hope kindles hope, millions more will find it. By our efforts, we have lit a fire as well—a fire in the minds of men. It warms those who feel its power, it burns those who fight its progress, and one day this untamed fire of freedom will reach the darkest corners of our world.

A few Americans have accepted the hardest duties in this cause—in the quiet work of intelligence and diplomacy . . . the idealistic work of helping raise up free governments . . . the danger-

ous and necessary work of fighting our enemies. Some have shown their devotion to our country in deaths that honored their whole lives—and we will always honor their names and their sacrifice.

All Americans have witnessed this idealism, and some for the first time. I ask our youngest citizens to believe the evidence of your eyes. You have seen duty and allegiance in the determined faces of our soldiers. You have seen that life is fragile, and evil is real, and courage triumphs. Make the choice to serve in a cause larger than your wants, larger than yourself—and in your days you will add not just to the wealth of our country, but to its character.

America has need of idealism and courage, because we have essential work at home—the unfinished work of American freedom. In a world moving toward liberty, we are determined to show the meaning and promise of liberty.

In America's ideal of freedom, citizens find the dignity and security of economic independence, instead of laboring on the edge of subsistence. This is the broader definition of liberty that motivated the Homestead Act, the Social Security Act, and the G.I. Bill of Rights. And now we will extend this vision by reforming great institutions to serve the needs of our time. To give every American a stake in the promise and future of our country, we will bring the highest standards to our schools, and build an ownership society. We will widen the ownership of homes and businesses, retirement savings and health insurance—preparing our people for the challenges of life in a free society. By making every citizen an agent of his or her own destiny, we will give our fellow Americans greater freedom from want and fear, and make our society more prosperous and just and equal.

In America's ideal of freedom, the public interest depends on private character—on integrity, and tolerance toward others, and the rule of conscience in our own lives. Self-government relies, in the end, on the governing of the self. That edifice of character is built in families, supported by communities with standards, and sustained in our national life by the truths of Sinai, the Sermon on the Mount, the words of the Koran, and the varied faiths of our people. Americans move forward in every generation by reaffirming all that is good and true that came before—ideals of justice and conduct that are the same yesterday, today, and forever.

In America's ideal of freedom, the exercise of rights is ennobled by service, and mercy, and a heart for the weak. Liberty for all does not mean independence from one another. Our nation relies on men and women who look after a neighbor and surround the lost with love. Americans, at our best, value the life we see in one another, and must always remember that even the unwanted have worth. And our country must abandon all the habits of racism, because we cannot carry the message of freedom and the baggage of bigotry at the same time.

From the perspective of a single day, including this day of dedication, the issues and questions before our country are many. From the viewpoint of centuries, the questions that come to us are narrowed and few. Did our generation advance the cause of freedom? And did our character bring credit to that cause?

These questions that judge us also unite us, because Americans of every party and background, Americans by choice and by birth, are bound to one another in the cause of freedom. We have known divisions, which must be healed to move forward in great purposes—and I will strive in good faith to heal them. Yet those divisions do not define America. We felt the unity and fellowship of our nation when freedom came under attack, and our response came like a single hand over a single heart. And we can feel that same unity and pride whenever America acts for good,

and the victims of disaster are given hope, and the unjust encounter justice, and the captives are set free.

We go forward with complete confidence in the eventual triumph of freedom. Not because history runs on the wheels of inevitability; it is human choices that move events. Not because we consider ourselves a chosen nation; God moves and chooses as He wills. We have confidence because freedom is the permanent hope of mankind, the hunger in dark places, the longing of the soul. When our Founders declared a new order of the ages; when soldiers died in wave upon wave for a union based on liberty; when citizens marched in peaceful outrage under the banner “Freedom Now”—they were acting on an ancient hope that is meant to be fulfilled. History has an ebb and flow of justice, but history also has a visible direction, set by liberty and the Author of Liberty.

When the Declaration of Independence was first read in public and the Liberty Bell was sounded in celebration, a witness said, “It rang as if it meant something.” In our time it means something still. America, in this young century, proclaims liberty throughout all the world, and to all the inhabitants thereof. Renewed in our strength—tested, but not weary—we are ready for the greatest achievements in the history of freedom.

May God bless you, and may He watch over the United States of America.



ABOUT THE PROJECT DIRECTOR

Alexander T.J. Lennon is a senior fellow in the CSIS International Security Program, where he focuses on the grand strategy and foreign and security policies of the contemporary major powers—the United States, China, Europe, India, Japan, and Russia—as well as nuclear proliferation prevention strategy. He recently codirected work on *The Age of Consequences: The Foreign Policy and National Security Implications of Global Climate Change* (CSIS/CNAS, 2007) and served as senior research staff for projects on the regional risks of proliferation, especially in Iran and North Korea, and for the CSIS Commission on Smart Power.

Lennon is also the editor-in-chief of CSIS's flagship journal, *The Washington Quarterly*, focusing on global strategic trends and their public policy implications, and has edited or coedited seven books including, most recently, *Global Powers in the 21st Century: Strategies and Relations* (MIT Press, 2008) as well as authoring numerous articles and op-eds. He is an adjunct professor in security studies at Georgetown University.

Lennon previously served briefly at the U.S. Department of State, focusing on Middle Eastern political-military affairs. He holds a Ph.D. in policy studies from the University of Maryland, an M.A. in national security studies from Georgetown University, and an A.B. from Harvard University.

