

The Global Crisis Today:
— Its Historical Roots and A New Road Toward Peace and Democracy
An Introductory Essay by Arthur Lipow, 09/07/2008

The Crisis, in summary: Broadly speaking, we see in the revival of the Cold War between the United States and its allies and a resurgent, oil-rich Russia; if you will, a sowing of the seeds of World War III. It is not at all inevitable, but must be viewed as a realistic possibility in the absence of counterbalancing forces and a new American (and Russian) policy.

To this, add a rising China—still a dictatorship under the Communist Party and one that is a rising military as well as economic power. All three countries are nuclear powers. World War III is not, we repeat, inevitable. To the danger of war must be added, of course, the catastrophic consequences of climate change. The challenge for us is to analyze the causes of this crisis and to point to solutions.

A WORLD IN CRISIS

A glance at recent newspapers reveals the following headlines: “Foreclosures’ hidden victims”; “Ruins of an American Dream”; “U.S. and global economies slipping in unison”; “Scientists alarmed by spread of ‘dead zones’ in oceans worldwide”; “Georgian army invades Ossetia”; “Russian troops occupy Georgia—haul off Georgian Armaments”; “American military brings troops with Humanitarian Aid to Georgia” ; “Poland, U.S. strike deal on missile interceptors”; ”Pakistan President will quit”; “Pakistan in political crisis”; “Violence shakes Afghanistan”; “U.S. ready to put Russian nuclear deal on ice”; Top bankers torn by crisis”; and (from the neo-con right) “NATO must stand up to Russia”; “Lockheed F-16 sale to Iraq . . .”.

If you want more to think about, try this out—a headline from the Financial Times of August 26: “Doubts cast on Zardari’s state of mental health”—As if Ali Zadari, the leading contender for the presidency of nuclear-armed Pakistan, was suffering from severe psychiatric problems as recently as last year . . . The widower of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was diagnosed with a range of serious illnesses including dementia, major depressive disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder in a series of medical reports spanning more than two years.” Headline from September 6: “Bhutto widower sweeps Pakistani presidential polls.”

Worried? Counting on the outcome of the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election?

This is a horrifying, yet utterly real picture of our world today.

What lies at the root of these national, regional and global crises and the renewal of threats of war, reminiscent of 1914? Remember if you will “The Guns of August” and the way World War I started. A trivial incident—an assassination—blew up the existing world. Not at all an inappropriate parallel to what is unfolding today. A reality not reflected in the presidential election of 2008. Where should we begin to understand how this has happened? History is not an unfolding of the inevitable. In this essay we look briefly at the history of the Cold War, together with “the road not taken” that might have

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led in a different direction, to a different world. This is not merely an academic exercise: by doing this, we can think begin to think clearly about what can be done now to address the crisis in which the world finds itself. History can be changed by making it – by starting over again, taking a new path to the future. Impossible? “Utopian”? Perhaps—but we have no choice.

COLD WAR ROOTS OF CURRENT CRISIS

Many people may be surprised to see that our answer starts with “the Cold War”. The Cold War was never just cold – hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, died in Vietnam and Korea, to mention two examples of the hot Cold War, while the threat of planetary disaster as the result of the nuclear arms race hung over the entire world. “Mutually assured destruction” was indeed MAD and real. The Cuban missile crisis came within inches of a global thermo-nuclear war.

The Cold War shaped the dangerous world we live in and, as events in Georgia demonstrate, may be accurately said to have never truly been allowed to end. The expansion of NATO and the placing of American military into Central/Eastern Europe and the countries in the perimeter of the former Soviet Union, after the symbolic fall of the Berlin Wall in 1991, continued the underlying conflict with a temporarily weakened Russia. The result: an increasingly authoritarian, economically revived Russia, primed with oil riches, and inflamed by nationalist sentiments that have been fed by NATO expansion and the U.S. proposals to place missile defense bases in Poland and the Czech Republic. Most important of all, what has occurred is the result of American policy, the failure to create a democratic opposition in Russia—one that could have opposed the Yeltsin regime and its successor under the secret policeman, Putin. A difficult task but one made all the more difficult by American policies, as discussed in this article. Our task today, here in America, is look for and encourage the democratic opposition in Russia by a change in the basic strategy of American foreign policy—a strategy leading directly to confrontation with Russia. Dick Cheney— a.k.a. the “Darth Vader” of American politics—visits Georgia, bearing the gift of a billion dollars, and not a word is heard from the political opposition for the simple reason that there is none in America. This is an immediate and obvious illustration of the main argument set forth in this essay: the black-hole, the opposition that doesn’t exist. Our focus in this essay is on the intellectual and policy dimension, not the absence of organizational or party opposition. A movement is needed, but without ideas and policies a movement will be powerless to bring about change. *New Beginnings* is, then, first about ideas as well as ideals and then about the organizational and movement needed to realize them.

These dangerous developments we have only just touched on, leave the United States, Europe and the world looking at the possibility of a Second Cold War in which the non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament agreements negotiated in the 1990s are being shredded, thereby preparing fertile soil for the seeds for a possible World War III; such seeds are apparently being sown in the Georgian crisis and the rivalry over Caspian oil.

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The roots of the Georgian crisis also reach deeply into the Kosovo crisis. Jan Kavan, former Czech Republic Foreign Minister and former UN General Assembly President (who inaugurated the *Center for Global Peace and Democracy* in a speech, delivered in Alameda last November) presciently warned, earlier this year, that Kosovo was “a potential powder keg not only in the Balkans”. Georges Friedman in his invaluable “geopolitical weekly” (August 25, 2008) calls Georgia and Kosovo “a single intertwined crisis.”

And at long last, a major American newspaper, *The Washington Post* (August 29, 2008), breaks with the party line found in most of the American media, to publish an insightful op-ed by Mark Weisbrot, co-Director of the **Center for Economic Policy Research**. Weisbrot argues that the roots of crisis with Russia over Ossetia goes “back to the early nineties” when “our own government threw away its chance to have a better relationship with post-Communist Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union.” Our own view, argued in this essay, is that this is only partly true. We believe that the present situation goes back to the policies pursued by the bi-partisan American Cold Warriors throughout the course of the Cold War. Still, given the critical silence and distortions over the events in Georgia and their aftermath, Weisbrot’s piece is an important advance in understanding. The world is a far more complicated place than the conventional, albeit almost unanimous, explanation presented by most liberals, conservatives and the neo-liberal, and centrist think tanks and their spokespersons—the crew seen regularly on **CSPAN**—not to forget the headbangers on right-wing cable television.

So, in 1991, the “enemy” was defeated; the Berlin Wall fell. It was “The End of History”. But the nuclear arms race continues to spread to new states; unstable Pakistan (and Afghanistan) descended into chaos, as Ahmed Rashid warned, and both Pakistan and India, long-time rivals, have nuclear weapons, while India was encouraged in its nuclear ambitions by the U.S. Russia, under Yeltsin, invaded Chechnya and was praised for this crime by Bill Clinton, who called Yeltsin the “George Washington” of his country, while Israel, the one full nuclear power in the Middle East, may soon face a nuclear armed Iran, and other Middle East countries contemplate gaining nuclear weapons. Most important of all, in the 1990s NATO was expanded into the nations on the periphery of the former Soviet Union and now, in 2008, “missile defense” was extended by the United States to Poland and the Czech Republic.

In short, the Cold War continues even as its “end” is hailed, triumphantly, as a great victory for the “free world” over totalitarianism.

Even outside of Europe, the consequences of the Cold War continue to echo. The failure to resolve the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, to take just one example of many, can be laid directly at the door of the “Fifty Year Wound”—the title of Derek Leebaert’s excellent study of the Cold War—that helped to create a vacuum in American and world politics and made the Middle East a central location for Cold War rivalries. In America, support of a settlement of the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians has meant the absence of an opposition politics. Cessation of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and the complete withdrawal of all existing settlements is not an unrealistic

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goal. Repeatedly, important actors in the region, including officials of the Israeli intelligence services, have called for solving the just, democratic demands of the Palestinian people for a state of their own. Sensible, conservative, just and democratic, and relatively straightforward, but impossible because of the vacuum in American politics—even Bill Clinton (to his credit) tried an end-of-term last-minute negotiation to bring the parties together, to no avail.

And, only to briefly surmise here, the absence of an opposition in America to help force restraints on Israeli policy, makes it all the more possible that there could well be an Israeli pre-emptive strike on Iran, with disastrous consequences for Israel and the entire Middle East, possibly the entire world. The same point applies, of course, to an American strike against Iran, in the last months of the Bush administration. Not at all impossible, and not hard to believe, given the record of preventive war. I can only say that it would be good to hear, at very least, voices from both parties publicly warning Israel and Bush not to undertake such a foolish move; instead, what we hear is a loud silence.

Without understanding this vacuum or hollowing out of America politics, born of the Cold War, the explanatory value of the “Israeli lobby”, for example, is nil. A plan for a nuclear-free Middle East, including Israel, ought to be at the top of the agenda of the real friends of the Israeli people (not AIPAC) in this country and of the peace movement. Instead, we hear only a very loud, yawning silence from both parties on this crucial issue, and anyone in the peace movement who dares to raise it is immediately denounced by the U.S. apologists for the Israeli government or by elements within the peace movement (e.g., “Answer”, who favor the nuclear arming of Iran as a weapon against both the U.S. and Israel. [This too is a continuation of the Cold War for, as we explain below, there was a second camp of Cold Warriors—“anti-imperialist” and/or pro-Soviet Cold Warriors who played an important role in the Western “peace movement”.]) Both resolution of the Palestinian question and regional nuclear disarmament would go a long way to defusing the crisis with Iran, undermining the reactionary regime there and would bolster an Iranian democratic opposition that sees the madness of an Iranian bomb—while at the same time defusing the political appeal of terrorist movements—including Al Qaeda. Of course when speaking of nuclear weapons we must not forget non-state terrorist actors—Al Qaeda most notably—which threaten to obtain and use nuclear weapons or the nuclear material for “dirty bombs”.

Thus, as we argue in this essay, the roots of the present crisis are to be found in the politics of the Cold War and the absence of an alternative foreign policy—a democratic foreign policy— democracy, social and economic, that is not circumscribed by free market globalization, that rejects the idea of military force as a solution for positive change. The crisis we see is a social and economic crisis—one that requires political solutions. The idea of a “war on terror”, fought with bombs, is only the most recent demonstration of the effect of the “fifty year wound” upon the American political, intellectual, academic universe. A recent Rand study of the demise of terrorist groups gives a basis for optimism that some realism and sanity may be creeping in around the edges of the American political universe—undoubtedly much to the dismay of the neo-cons who, as in the construction of the “communist threat”, found in the “war on terror” a

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rich seam of threats to mine in order to bully potential opposition and undermine democracy in America. Not that the threat was not and is not real in both cases—I don't want to be misunderstood on this vital point— just that the nature of the disease, and therefore of its cure, is wildly distorted to serve the purpose of the militant advocates of the Cold War and present-day empire. Vietnam is a case in point and even, lest we forget, the “menace” of China decades ago until the arch-Cold Warrior, Nixon, and his deputy, Kissinger, turned around after having destroyed the careers of people like Owen Lattimore, for their “treason”, and after the Cold Warriors created McCarthyism, which enveloped not only Communists and fellow-travelers, but democratic socialists and liberals, as well—any, in fact, who challenged the status quo. Stifling intellectual and cultural conformity was an important part of the political agenda, and helped to create the wasteland that is present in today's American political life. Sarah Palin as a possible President-in-the-wings of the most powerful country in the world is not just a bad joke—no more than was George W. Bush's tenure.

Thus, the Cold War had a cultural and intellectual, as well as a political, dimension. The sterilization of intellectual life by doctrinaire anti-communism echoes today, I think (from my two decades of observation from abroad and the last decade living the United States), in the impoverished discourse about American politics found in even the “serious” magazines and newspapers, and the growing conformity in the academy, when it comes to challenging the premises of the “war on terror” and the new, emerging Cold War. *Dissent*, as one of its founding editors accurately charges, now “assents” and moves closer to its one-time rival *Commentary*— although (not yet) to a merger as a new journal, “Dissentary”, as Woody Allen once insightfully joked in the film *Manhattan*. But a jointly sponsored conference a few years ago between these two journals of the “left” and “right” (“is it 1939 – again?”) suggests, I think, that Woody Allen accurately perceived an important underlying shared impulse. Right-wing Zionism and sterile anti-Communism together produce a poisonous ideological brew.

The intellectual wasteland (which one might also phrase as a question: “what is left of the left?") that was created in the Cold War is another, long-term consequence of the “fifty year wound.” The shameful treatment of one of America's outstanding academic intellectuals, Professor Tony Judt, sparked by the head of the **Anti-Defamation League**, when Judt dared to question the role of **AIPAC** in Israeli policy is, of course, peculiarly intense in connection with the subject of Israel and Zionism, but is still basically part of this pattern. As during the McCarthy period, academics learned to keep their mouths shut about a wide range of subjects, not just those specifically connected to Communism.

David Horowitz's little list of the most dangerous professors in America has, I suspect, more respectable support on the right, and especially the Zionist right, than is openly admitted, and many teachers of the politics of the Middle East must think twice before daring to speak truthfully about their views, lest Horowitz put their names on his list. The fate of Norman Finkelstein was a warning to enforce intellectual conformity far beyond de Paul University.

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In the context of the “war on terror” and the bogus “crusade” against “Islamofascism”, I shudder to think what students may be learning about civil liberties and the U.S. Constitution today, if my own experience of terrified high school teachers and university academics in the 1950s is any guide, especially given the vastly enhanced powers of technology and the computerized surveillance of the “Secret State.” In the 1950s, UCLA had to go to the trouble of hiring an informer to take notes on professorial heresies—nowadays it’s much easier. Or imagine the dialogue today between a high school civics teacher and a student who asks about the First Amendment and the Patriot Act or expresses doubts about the inviolability of the principle of sovereignty in Georgia in light of the occupation of Iraq by the American government—a court ruling has stated that public school teachers have no right to share their opinions with students on school grounds! As for torture—well, let’s pass on to the next subject.

I am not suggesting that there is a full-scale witch-hunt, only that there is a conformist atmosphere in any institution of secondary and higher education where controversial subjects are taught—and the worst thing about this is that it is the consequence of an intellectual wasteland inherited from a narrowing down of the spectrum of acceptable, thinkable, views, inherited from the long Cold War and reinforced now by the bludgeon of the current “war on terror.” Surveillance of books borrowed from libraries is not imaginary, and the titles of books ordered on-line could easily be interpreted as evidence of subversive thinking or terrorist plotting. Surely the best evidence for the foregoing is the fact that the **American Psychological Association** is (even as this is being written) debating whether its members can participate in military or official procedures in which torture is used to extract information. Dr. Mengele’s spirit seems thus reborn. Only those who remember the entirely justifiable outcry by Cold Warriors over Soviet psychiatric practices can appreciate the deep hypocrisy of their present-day neo-con heirs—often the same people now, as then—as they support torture and a range of practices that not even their Soviet opponents attempted during the Cold War, less because of any moral scruples than for lack of opportunity.

The Cold War thereby helped to create the intellectual and moral wasteland of American politics and the “war on terror” has undoubtedly created, at very least, a generation of cautious academics who watch their words for fear of being labeled “soft” on terrorism or who might be concerned about computer-based surveillance in their classrooms and intellectual communications, Big Brother is certainly watching but I think that is far less important in explaining the dull acquiescence of intellectuals than is the collapse of liberalism as it confronts a new world of real-life terrorists and reactionary fundamentalism to which liberalism has no answers—absolutely no convincing economic or social program to counterpose to the conservative, right-wing’s solution: military force to accompany global capitalism.

Undoubtedly, pure academic careerism, together with the hollowing out of liberalism, is also a major factor in the collapse of critical thinking. Remember that Chalmers Johnson is an exception and, not unimportantly, he no longer holds an active academic post; in any case, Johnson had the intellectual advantage of beginning as a conservative, not a

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liberal. If this seems too contradictory or paradoxical, or just contrarian, see our discussion below of the “strange death of liberal America”.

I am concerned that the foregoing remarks about the long-term, enduring, political and cultural effects of the Cold War and their link to the atmosphere in America post-9/11 today sound farfetched to some of my readers. It is certainly in any strict sense unprovable, but as someone who experienced for twenty years, in the 1980s and 1990s, liberating air of British political and intellectual life, within the academy and outside, it seems to me to be undeniably true. Just the existence of newspapers such as the Guardian and the Independent and those journalists, like John Pilger, who freely write for them, when contrasted to the stodgy establishment-compliant American elite press with their lack of critical reporting, supports this observation. When did you last see an article by Noam Chomsky in the New York Times? It is a more subtle factor than drum-beats for war in, say, Vietnam, or, today, in Afghanistan where the “good war” is saluted, without irony, by the liberal establishment, but it is one of the effects of the Cold War to have left a lop-sided American politics in which “liberalism” has been made a curse word and half of the political spectrum has been lopped off. A British Tory might well find himself comfortable in the left-wing of the Democratic party. Or to put it another way, the “center” is far to the right of where it was only a few decades ago. The absence of a left, in the European sense, advocates of a class-based politics, is in part what we mean when we write below about the “black-hole” in American politics.

Even more important is the way in which the every-day vocabulary of what I would call social-democratic or New Deal liberalism has simply vanished from everyday liberal political discourse. It can be found on Bill Moyers’ **Journal**, and sometimes found in the columns of liberal **New York Times** columnists, but otherwise it is made to sound outrageously left-wing and largely left unmentioned. . Bill Clinton’s boast of destroying the New Deal programs for women and children scarcely drew a whimper from liberals. Professor Gray Brechin, of the University of California, has rediscovered the WPA in the Bay Area but when Oakland is seen to have 43,000 unemployed and to be suffering from an epidemic of violence afflicting especially African-American young men, no one dares to suggest the obvious solution: public employment. Such a thing is just unthinkable and far too radical, as I observed after sitting through a meeting of the “left-wing” **Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club** in Oakland.

To pursue my point about the peculiar strength of the impact of Cold War McCarthyism in American politics and intellectual life, I want to note that Owen Lattimore was able to find a safe and sane haven in England (at the very university where I later taught) away from the reach of the bi-partisan witch-hunters. I can personally testify to the decency and sanity of British conservatives, such as Lord Boyle, who was Vice-Chancellor of Leeds University where five or six full-fledged members of the Communist Party openly taught without creating an earthquake as it would have in the U.S. Most of them were honest, good scholars and teachers—surely empirical disproof of Sidney Hook’s McCarthyite tract, *Heresy Yes, Conspiracy No*. It seems hard to believe that a bitter fight raged in the 1950s and 1960s in American higher education and within liberal organizations like Americans for Democratic Action, over the right of Communists to

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teach—an issue that never, as far as I know, arose in Britain where there was an influential Communist Party, and dozens of its party members were employed academics. In the shameful role played by liberals, like the leadership of ADA in joining the crusade for firing Communist teachers, we see once again the death of American liberalism on the cross of the Cold War and fearful anti-Communism.

To pick up the thread of the argument, I would argue that not a little of the inability of American academics to think critically about American imperialism and its role in supporting reactionary antidemocratic regimes and policies (to think critically about the Cold War and dangerous subjects like Russia and China or Vietnam during the Cold War) carries over as a kind of tribal memory today in the post-9/11 era of the “war on terror”. The easily observable conformity one sees today can be traced directly back to the era of the Cold War and the lessons learned by those academics concerned for their careers.

The fact that one brave and honorable academic at the University of California at Berkeley was recently able to mount, against tremendous opposition from the UC Administration, a major exhibit of Botero’s artistic indictment of torture at Guantanamo Bay, is a case of the exception that proves to be the rule. Only one other institution of higher education was willing to do the same thing. Enlistment by Academics today in the great “war on terror”—which is one of the shameful secrets of today’s academy as I have observed it—goes back to the lessons learned at the beginning of the Cold War. John Yoo’s views are not as unpopular with his colleagues or his students at the University of California law school as one might expect nor, more importantly, are his ideas without influence, as I have myself witnessed. But, that’s a subject for the book of which this essay is only a part.

To sum up: we live, in America today, with the bitter fruit of narrow conservative conformity that goes back to the Cold War – even if one face of this conservatism takes on a “radical” look, in what Robert Hughes has rightly savaged as the “culture of complaint”. Identity politics is a deeply conservative view of the world, even if espoused by self-described academic radicals who reject (more accurately, can’t begin to imagine) the idea of a “Global Class War,” as Jeff Faux, former president of the labor think-tank, Economic Policy Institute, calls his book of advocacy and analysis. As the insightful Robert Hughes remarks in *The Culture of Complaint*”, academic “radicals” ought to look at Bosnia and other examples of ethnic cleansing to understand the real meaning of the identity politics they advocate. In America, the academic pseudo-“left” is the product of a drift to the right, the hollowing out of American political discourse, which was as essential a part of the Cold War as surely as the politics of sterile anti-communism was. This cultural dimension of the Cold War is still with us and is a important element in the “black-hole” or absence of opposition I discuss below. The consequences of this history could allow a demagogue to lead us into a new nightmare of war and despotism in the 21st Century.

SUPERPOWER: BROKEN GOVERNMENT, BROKEN POLITICS: THE BLACK—HOLE

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Even if it is now in economic decline, America remains the great hegemony, the military and economic Superpower, shaping the world now as it did during the years of the Cold War although, during the Cold War, limited by the challenge of the Soviet empire which appealed to the anticapitalist, nationalist sentiments and desire for economic development in the “third world”. Indeed, the history of the Cold War cannot be written without understanding its impact on the developing nations of Africa and Asia and the “third world” (see Odd Arne Westad’s *The Global Cold War*.) When the Cold War grew hot, it did in Asia, Africa and Latin America, not in Europe.

We would argue that the impact of the U.S., then as now, can best be understood in terms of a metaphor drawn from astronomy: a black-hole, an invisible force, a seeming, but only illusory, absence—an absence that is nonetheless real and powerful in its effect. The absence of a party of opposition that could pose an alternative to the cold war and to the world in crisis today—,summed up as we have said, by a democratic foreign policy that would bring social and economic justice and national liberation from the ruins of colonialism, as well as economic development, by way of an alternative to Western corporate imperialism or “globalization” from above. Such a democratic foreign policy might have challenged the appeal of totalitarian Soviet backed policies. The same logic applies to American cold war policy in Eastern Europe which we discuss below. Revolutionary changes that might have ended the cold war far sooner were undermined by American foreign policy—this was done deliberately, because such changes threatened the American empire as much as they did the Russian. All of this can be seen most clearly on another continent, far from the Soviet Union, in the case of the overthrow, by a CIA backed coup, of Salvador Allende’s democratic socialist government in Chile.

To Chile, add the attempted overthrow and subsequent blockade of the Cuban government, undoubtedly an undemocratic, communist, anti-capitalist one, which further illustrates this point. Tiny Cuba is seen as an anti-capitalist point of infection; its lack of democracy is irrelevant to watchdogs at the *National Endowment for Democracy*, just as was the democratic nature of Allende’s socialism. From the standpoint of the bi-partisan American foreign policy establishment, the Cuban government can only be responded to by military force and followed by a decades long economic boycott. Not just totalitarian communism, then, but democratic socialism or for that matter any radical economic change (as in the case of Chavez in Venezuela) is unacceptable and remains so to both parties. Even if American liberals were uncomfortable with the consequences of these policies, their acquiescence to the underlying policy flowed from their political support for the premises of the Cold War and from their late-blooming belief in the virtues of “free market” globalization. How else to explain that the criminally stupid decades-long policy toward Cuba remains unchanged and unchallenged to this very day, through Democratic and Republican regimes alike? Only change from outside and above is to be allowed, as exemplified by the attempted CIA backed coup against Chavez. In the coming year or two, we will probably be seeing this scenario being played out again in Cuba, no matter which party wins the 2008 election. As in the Cold War in Europe, and

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now in the dawning weeks of the new Cold War, the objective is to foreclose radical, even if democratic, economic alternatives.

This system of bi-partisanship in foreign affairs as in domestic policy meant that there was no effective opposition party—a fact most clearly seen in the Clinton Presidency, in which not only was NATO expanded to the Russian periphery, but “free trade” was enshrined in NAFTA and the incorporation of China into the WTO. Millions of American jobs were lost and Mexico was devastated economically by the ruin of its peasant agriculture. The “Party of Davos”, as Jeff Faux calls it, was the bi-partisan embodiment of the triumph of the interests of corporate America over the American people and the final disgrace of liberalism.

TOM PAINE AND MARTIN LUTHER KING, Jr. vs. AMERICAN EMPIRE

To step back historically for a moment: democracy in America is in serious trouble. When Alexis de Tocqueville wrote his famous book early in the 19th century, newly minted, as it were, from a movement that grew into a Revolution, America was seen as a model for what democracy could be. Tom Paine issued a clarion call for “the rights of man” that was heard around the world. The one major cancer to mar that model took a bitter civil war to eradicate: slavery. It would take another hundred years to win complete legal equality for African-Americans and that required another great upheaval from below and outside the party system: the Civil Rights Movement, led by Martin Luther King, Jr., which destroyed “Jim Crow” in the South and won, at long last, full suffrage for African-Americans in the Southern States. “Jim Crow” and the denial of voting rights to African-Americans in the South was supported by both parties, most especially the Democrats whose southern Dixiecrat wing dominated the party and Congress. King had to be willing to disrupt the great “New Deal Coalition” in order to win the battle for civil rights. He did so but only under tremendous pressure from his liberal allies. This too is untold history, and even when known, increasingly disregarded history—we will have occasion in the future to come back to this, because it underlies the myth of the “progressive” Democratic party that has a vital role in the shaping of current American politics and institutions.

From this original model of democracy, that was truly the inspiration for the spread of ideas and movements based on democratic ideals to Europe, the United States has become a pariah country whose actions and reputation make a mockery of the very ideals it once stood for. If we look back on the past 40 years, from the wars in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq, in which tens of thousands of innocent people have been killed, to the conflict in Somalia, it is all too apparent that American military might has been used to shore up reactionary, undemocratic regimes—ironically, all in the name of “democracy!” A now long forgotten bastion of the “free world” was Franco’s Spain which ought to be recalled when we think about the apologist’s version of the history of the Cold War— along with the various dictatorships in Latin America supported by American power. Pinochet . . . Somoza . . . Batista . . . a long bi-partisan “dishonor” roll.

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A key result of what might be called “the first long war” (to remind us of the new cold warriors’ current locution, “the long war”) is that the American system of government itself is, not surprisingly, in serious trouble—“terminal decay” might not be too strong a way to describe the situation. Two political scientists, whose work has not received the attention it deserves, write about *Downsizing Democracy: How America Sidelined its Citizens and Privatized its Public*. The same authors followed up with *Presidential Power: Unchecked and Unbalanced*, to complete the picture of the transformation that has occurred. John R. MacArthur (publisher of Harpers) adds to the indictment with his important, demythologizing, new book, *You Can’t Be President: The Outrageous Barriers to Democracy in America*.

Without meaningful parties, the powerful administrative state makes meaningful participation doubly impossible. Even the process of voting, as we saw in 2000, is corrupted with the stamp of approval of the Supreme Court. And yet, we preach to the world about democracy.

THE IMPERIAL CONTEXT

Over 750 American military bases circle the globe. As Chalmers Johnson has explained in *The Sorrows of Empire* and his last book, *Nemesis*, the American economy has been brought to the edge of bankruptcy in a mad pursuit by our uncontrolled ruling elite of a “new empire”—the terminology of the neo-cons, a frank admission of the goal. An American controlled World Bank and IMF together with the WTO, plan the world economy, making the “free market” a regulated free-for-all for private corporations that outsources jobs and off-shores money. Central banks regulate their national economies and do their best to coordinate their efforts with the other central banks. All of this gives the lie to the Thatcherite triumphalism of the post-cold war years, expressed as the triumph of the “free market” and “free trade”—now shown to be based on centralized planning by powerful global institutions, which attempt to plan, as best they can, a deeply anarchic, fundamentally flawed global financial system. “Free trade” means freedom for capital to move where it pleases, within the highly structured framework of the World Trade Organization, whatever the consequences for middle and working classes. Trade unions exist to control the market for labor and are thus, by definition, antithetical to the pure free market, which is why there is no room for them in the plans of the free market planners. If, as in Chile or China, the unions get in the way, they are, to borrow the words of the old union song, “rolled right over”—their organizations banned or hampered, leaders jailed or “disappeared”—all in the name of “freedom,” as Milton Friedman demonstrated by his support for the Pinochet regime in Chile.

Now in the American “homeland”, where the labor movement has been under attack by the advocates of freedom for decades, there is a deepening economic crisis, widespread unemployment and poverty, hunger, a health care system that serves fewer and fewer people as the days go by, and a prison system bursting at the seams. The widespread homelessness, already present for decades, is widening further to accommodate those who have been marginalized by the foreclosure crisis, while many of the suburban enclaves where they once lived are rapidly diminishing to the status of ghost towns. The federal government rushes to bail out the banking industry and to assure everyone that

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everything is going to be just fine; but banks are failing, and many individual homeowners have nowhere to turn. “Moral hazard,” about which improvident countries and individuals were sternly lectured by tenured-for-life free market economists and politicians alike, is unheard when it comes to spending public money to rescue the rich and powerful.

One answer to the economic crisis, in the face of what is clearly turning into a world-wide recession and possibly a full-blown depression, is—or at least has been—to urge us to consume more “to do our part to support the economy”. This patriotic consumerism, whether for luxury items or for fuel to run our cars, contributes heavily to the enormous environmental problem of global warming, and has further global implications: economic instabilities, human rights violations, labor disputes, food shortages, lack of living wages, a disappearance of species and resources from our planet. The money (cash and credit) that we consumer-citizens spend to support our national economy no longer supports welfare programs and services that might solve some of the problems in our country. We might well think again about an old and supposedly outworn idea of producing goods to satisfy real human needs rather than to create profits. But that would require—as I think it does—a radical rethinking of our basic values and the very structure of our economic system.

Many decades ago, when I was growing up, my family and I used to listen to the baritone voice of Norman Thomas, the democratic socialist and many-time Socialist Party candidate for President, who was a frequent and popular guest on the mainstream radio program, “Town Meeting of the Air”, saying what seemed to me then—and to millions of other Americans—that “production for use” ought to replace “production for profit” and that political democracy was undermined by corporate economic concentration. Political democracy, in short, required economic democracy. It made sense to me then as, indeed, it makes sense to me now, and I am sure it will, in the coming years, make more and more sense to Americans and the rest of the world, as they consider the effects of corporate globalization and global warming, and come to recognize “the limits of growth” required for the very survival of humanity.

At this juncture we come back to the Cold War because, as we saw in the example of Salvador Allende, any kind of “socialism” whether democratic or not, was dishonestly stigmatized as the equivalent of Soviet totalitarianism, or, at very least, as unrealistic, as an oxymoron; and so, “socialism” suffered the same fate in the Cold War as did liberalism. The story is far more complicated, of course, but it is an essential part of the tale of the hollowing out of American political life.

Instead of being used to meet real needs, wealth is sent overseas to continue a perpetual, ever-expanding war and to service the gigantic debt that a feckless and fiscally profligate government has created, with bi-partisan support, to perpetuate the illusion of prosperity. Sooner or later the house of cards had to come crashing down—and now it has. A political solution is needed to address the economic crisis but no party offers one: the Democratic party is the party of Goldman-Sachs, and so is the Republican party. Robert Rubin is replaced by Henry Paulson, another horse from the same stable. The dominant

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wing of the Democratic party is led by the Democratic Leadership Conference, a.k.a. Robert Rubin and the Hamilton Project. Money from corporate contributors flows into the Democratic and Republican party coffers alike. They know exactly what they are buying, even if party enthusiasts want to ignore it.

Norman Thomas, when I got to speak to him in person many years after I had listened to him on the radio, complained that the New Deal liberals had stolen the ideas and ideals of democratic socialism, and there is some truth to that. But the world changed after 1939: the permanent war economy “solved” the problem of unemployment; the garrison state and imperial Presidency came into its own, while the old, self-employed middle class, made up of small farmers and self-employed professionals, practically vanished as a class, and then the modern labor movement emerged. The promise of the latter was put into the freezer by the Cold War, and while liberal ideals and values of reason and democracy remain valid, the consequences of “SuperCapitalism” require us to think once more, as Thomas pointed out, about how to square the circle, that is, how to reconcile the undemocratic nature of economic—but this time, global—corporate power with democratic control, thereby bringing us back to the “Town Meeting of the Air” of decades ago and to the hollowing out of American politics.

POST-9/11: THE ATTACK ON DEMOCRACY AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

The Military Commissions Act, recent changes to which grant the President almost dictatorial powers, and the latest robust version of the Patriot Act, in combination with other laws and institutions of the National Security State, undermine the foundations of our democratic republic by removing individual protections and rights. Habeas Corpus, the cornerstone of a rule of law restricting arbitrary power, has been deeply wounded, while “the Secret State” gains powers by which to intrude on the privacy of its citizens in ways unimaginable only a few years ago. The most recent expansion of surveillance powers, just a few months ago, received overwhelming support from members of both parties in Congress.

What can we expect in 2009? And 2010?

THE IMPERIAL PRESIDENT

The “unitary Presidency” is a concept and potential practice of Presidential dictatorship; it is an outgrowth of the Imperial Presidency. The Imperial Presidency can be traced back to Theodore Roosevelt and, of course, flowered under FDR and the New Deal. Presidential “signing statements” were not invented by George W. Bush, even if he enormously increased their use over the practice of Bill Clinton during his administration. It is naïve to think that the enormous growth in the power of the Presidency will be reversed by whoever is elected in 2008. We will be exploring the expansion of Presidential power, the Imperial President, and the breakdown of Congressional authority in future issues of this journal. The underlying issue is one of the survival of American democracy in the 21st Century.

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THE SECRET STATE

It sounds like it is straight out of a spy thriller or a Kafka novel, but “the Secret State” is real. To the FBI, the CIA and the dozens of intelligence agencies created during the Cold War, in combination with all the branches of the military (whose powers have superseded the boundaries set by the 19th century “posse commitatus” law, which forbade military intervention in domestic matters) have been added the private mercenary contract corporations, such as Blackwater. NORCOM, the “Northern Command” is capable of pointing a gun at us and at our puny democratic institutions. Torture, assassination, “renditions”, and secret (or not so secret, such as at Guantanamo Bay and in Iraq and Afghanistan) prisons have become commonplace tools of empire. The “Homeland” is just another base of operations. “We the People” are becoming the subjects of the Empire. As 19th century liberals warned, a republic and an empire cannot co-exist. The revelations and subsequent cover-ups about torture and secret renditions just confirm that a malignant cancer is present in this country. Unless the cancer is treated, it will metastasize until it kills democracy in America.

Slowly but surely the U.S. is moving to become a “garrison state,” with a militarized police and a “homeland security” department to spy upon American citizens and to contain the immigrant population. “Plan Mexico” is only the latest chapter in this saga of spreading an authoritarianism to be presided over by the military. Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. come under the control of the Northern Command and, in case of civil discontent, the framework for repression exists. Next door to us, Mexico is boiling with political unrest based on economic grievances produced in no small part by NAFTA, in combination with its own ruling elites’ malign policies. “Plan Mexico” arises out of our American establishment’s fear of what may happen in Mexico. [Listen to Professor Richard Roman’s insightful account of Mexico’s crisis on-line at the Alameda Public Affairs website.]

The rest of the world sees and watches in horror at what has happened to America. At the *Center for Global Peace and Democracy*, we are proud of the American Bill of Rights and of all those who have led movements created to fulfill its promise—from Tom Paine, to abolitionists like Frederick Douglass and Wendell Phillips, to labor leaders and democratic socialists like Eugene V. Debs, and leaders of the civil rights movement like Martin Luther King, Jr., whose great Riverside Church anti-war speech given during the Vietnam war we reprint on our web-site. More than any other recent writing King’s words reflect the spirit that underlies our project.

HOW DID WE GET HERE? WHAT HAPPENED? THE BITTER FRUIT OF BIPARTISAN FOREIGN POLICY

George F. Kennan may be accurately described as the intellectual father of the fifty dangerous years of the Cold War, although he later proved himself to be a reluctant and even critical Cold Warrior. In an oft-cited op-ed that appeared in the New York Times on February 5, 1997, Kennan asserted:

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“[Expanding NATO] may be expected to inflame the nationalistic, anti-Western and militaristic tendencies in Russian opinion; to have an adverse effect on the development of Russian democracy; to restore the atmosphere of the Cold War to East-West relations, and to impel Russian foreign policy in directions not to our liking. And, last but not least, it might make it much more difficult, if not impossible, to secure the Russian Duma’s ratification of the START II [Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty] agreement and to achieve further reductions of nuclear weaponry.”
[George F. Kennan, “**A Fateful Error**”, The New York Times, February 5, 1997].

Kennan’s warning, delivered at age 93, went unheeded and was soon pretty much forgotten, as the expansion of NATO into Eastern Europe proceeded unchecked under the Clinton and George the First presidencies. Just since the beginning of this year, alone, agreements to establish an American “missile defense” system in both Poland and the Czech Republic have proceeded and now been concluded (in the case of Poland), even as Russian soldiers marched into Georgia. Why? Because Georgia, an unstable, adventurist, nationalist regime drags the U.S. in to back up its own imperial ambitions. Ironically, the U.S. Secretary of State made the remark that Russia has no right to attack a sovereign nation—this is ironic because the U.S. made this unilateral move on Iraq; what else can the world do but follow our awful example? Even though the danger is obvious, there have been no critical voices from either party or candidate in the U.S. The election campaigns proceed, but the candidates from both sides seem content to support these actions, leading pundits from other countries to speculate as to their involvement in what some are calling the “new Cold War” between Russia and the United States. The “peace movement,” which helped propel Obama into the Democratic nomination stands silently by in the face of this dangerous development.

Vladimir Putin, named “person of the year” by *TIME Magazine* in 2007 under a banner reading “A Tsar Is Born” (and no longer actually the “elected” ruler of his nation, but still wielding power, none the less) warns, metaphorically at first and then literally, of a new Cuban missile crisis—a warning which ought to send chills through the spines of all intelligent people who are old enough to remember when the entire world trembled before the very real possibility of nuclear holocaust.

THE AMNESIA OF A NATION, AND OUR COLLECTIVE SILENCE

But, the unfortunate truth is, people have forgotten what really happened, and the history has been hijacked. The collective memory of a nation has been sanitized, to the point that there is little response, in the somewhat amnesiac state of opinion in the American public sector, high and low. Little response, if at all, just as when Kennan’s warning was ignored by players in both political parties and the American media.

Fast-forward to today, and back to our headlines, the policies of the Bush administration, including the sending of American ships and military assistance into the Georgian tinderbox—“humanitarian aid” that has nothing, as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice

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hastens to assure us, NOTHING to do with oil pipelines. These policies, as are all the policies put forward by President Bush since 9/11, are met with bi-partisan approval or, at any rate, with active, deliberate, silence.

Editorial comments or letters in the current American papers about what is happening in Georgia or about U.S. involvement, much less U.S. culpability, are pretty much uncritical. The Cold War hawks have come out to play once again. Reminders of Kennan's warning about NATO expansion are all but forgotten. Only a few lone voices even mention NATO expansion—New York Times columnist, Tom Friedman, is a surprising addition to the ranks of those who want to remind the American people of the implications of NATO expansion.

Meanwhile, the fact of NATO expansion, which forms the backdrop of this present crisis and confrontation on the world stage, does not rate a mention in the statements of the leadership much less the candidates of either party. The fact of the proposed placement of U.S. ballistic missiles at bases in Poland and the Czech Republic was, until recently, largely unknown outside those two countries. No one outside of Poland and the Czech Republic calls for dismantling NATO's presence in the Russian periphery or for stopping the creation of missile bases. In this country, there is bi-partisan consensus, even from both presidential candidates, about the nature of the Georgian crisis and the solutions put forward by the Bush administration.

Another way of understanding the crisis in the Caucasus is that it is, as Michael Klare argues, a "minor skirmish in a far more significant geopolitical struggle between Moscow and Washington over the energy riches of the Caspian Sea basin." These vast energy reserves became, in the 1990s, the object of a geo-political strategy, designed by Bill Clinton to shut Russia out by making Georgia an "energy corridor" for the export of gas and oil directly into Western markets. While Russia was still weak and absorbed by its internal problems under Yeltsin, it was not able to protest the American strategy. However, the strategy didn't go unnoticed in Russia (and neither did the expansion of NATO), and ultimately played a large part in Putin's rise to power. There is much validity in Klare's argument, but I think he overlooks the most important factor of all—that Clinton's dangerous geo-political strategy took place in full view of the American public. But, as in the case of Kennan's warning over NATO expansion (of which it was an inextricable part), there was and is no political opposition in America to Clinton's strategy despite its obvious dangers. Once again, the black-hole, which has its roots in the bipartisan Cold War, is vital to explaining what happened—and what did not happen and is what is still not happening as Dick Cheney, the "Darth Vader" of American politics, visits Georgia with a billion dollars of support for the Georgian regime. Protests? None heard, but another seed of conflict is planted, and World War III moves a step closer.

THE "PEACE MOVEMENT": GEORGIA; THE "GOOD WAR IN AFGHANISTAN; PAKISTAN'S DESCENT INTO CHAOS (AHMED RASHID)

Even the "Peace Movement" is silent on the developments in Georgia, at least so far. Drums are still being beaten against the war in Iraq, but the fragmented and tattered peace

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movement has not said much about Georgia or about the long-standing situation in Afghanistan, despite the fact that we—the US and NATO—have invaded the latter country and are carrying on a brutal campaign to pacify it, and, to use the language of liberal imperialism, to “build a state” in a land that has never known a modern state. A policy, or, rather, a conceit that only underlines the deadly ignorance of those who lead this country and the rest of the Western alliance. These leaders and their intellectual admirers might try reading some history or even having a chat with the Russian military about their experiences in Afghanistan—this certainly had at least as much to do with the collapse of the Soviet empire as the did the arms race. The reflections of the *Russian General Staff on The Soviet-Afghan War: How a Superpower Fought and Lost* (2002) is easily available in an English translation from the University of Kansas Press. Very instructive—perhaps it ought to be required reading for our Presidential candidates.

But we cannot talk about any of this, can we, without doing damage to the Democratic Party—for this is an election year and the candidate, Obama, vows to fight the “good war” in Afghanistan and already has policy advisors working on it. We can safely assume that the peace movement has collapsed for the time being, because most of those who support peace are supporting Obama and the Democratic Party—because, among other things, they think Obama will “end the war,” the war in Iraq, that is, not the American military presence in the Middle East and, indeed, not in Iraq itself. The announced sale of F-16 fighter jets to the client regime in Iraq, for use against possible insurgencies, assures the continued presence of America in Iraq, whether or not the troops themselves are in some sense withdrawn. A thoughtless, unthinking, peace movement has trapped itself into repeating the slogan—not wrong in itself—of troop withdrawal while ignoring what is actually going on in Iraq. The peace movement has been dumbed down, perhaps by, too much time spent on the internet reading communiqués from Moveon.org, or too many marches, and not enough time reading books and journals and thinking—and, best of all, meeting in local groups (our solution), in order to analyze the crisis described here, and find a way to build intellectually informed networks of like-groups which can, in time, emerge, organically, into a genuine movement. Meanwhile, in Pakistan, as we have just seen, a new President has his finger on the button . . .

THE COLD WAR ROOTS OF OUR WORLD CRISIS: “SAME DRUM, DIFFERENT DRUMMER”

The real history and meaning of the Cold War has yet to be fully appreciated and incorporated into an understanding of the crisis now confronting the world. Conservative, retired military man, Andrew Bacevich, has made a good start in his book, *American Empire*, in which he correctly characterizes the Cold War as a struggle between rival imperialisms. Bacevich underlines the continuity between Republicans and Democrats in the 1990s under Bill Clinton thusly: “same drum, different drummer”. This phrase will undoubtedly, and sadly, be applicable to whichever candidate wins the 2008 election. Bacevich has also dissected American militarism and argued for its incompatibility with the tradition of American democracy, a tradition intertwined with antimilitarism which is all but dead today among liberals who either ignore the manifest militarization of America or who advocate the permeation of civilian society by a system of “universal

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service,”—“voluntary”, of course, but universal nonetheless. Just another relatively minor example in our system of what political philosopher Sheldon Wolin calls “inverted totalitarianism”: language is used to debase and distort understanding. Language distortion is more effective than outright lies.

To even speak of American imperialism, to give it a name, was unthinkable during the Cold War. Anyone who did so was immediately branded as an apologist for the other, rival, imperialist camp, as indeed they might well have been. We owe a debt of gratitude to the neo-cons, who have openly boasted of their current mission to build the American empire, for making it possible to place a label (with along theoretical and political history) on the reality of imperialism. The term “imperialism” was widely used, before the Cold War, by liberals and conservatives alike, but later abandoned when it became more convenient to rationalize the Cold War as a struggle between democracy and totalitarianism—this rationalization even as the American system began to visibly take on more of the institutional and moral degeneracy of the Soviet system (instituting the “national security state”, using torture in gulag-like secret prison facilities, and “disappearing” critics as in Pinochet’s Chile). Amnesty International’s justifiable comparison of the American policies to the gulag, angered mightily those Cold Warriors on the right, such as Dick Cheney, who had made that term their stock-in-trade denunciation (wholly hypocritical) of their totalitarian counterparts.

I cannot neglect to mention here the counterparts of the American cold warriors, the critics who were apologists for the Soviet regime, whose own double-standards, when it came to human rights and the Soviet nuclear weapons arms race and Soviet imperialism, made them the political and moral mirror image of their right-wing opponents. I like to use the term “gulagistas” to sum up the politics of these people on the “left”—still important, as in the case of the apologists for the Cuban dictatorship today or the Chinese Communist regime. I assume it is unnecessary to say that our own views and belief in democracy, then as now, have nothing in common with either of these intellectual and political groups. But the hypocrisy of both lingers on to debase political discourse, and experience demonstrates the need to emphasize this point. Orwell is our guide here to the need to reject all double-standards and all double-speak on the “left” and “right” as well. 1984 is as relevant today—perhaps more so—as when it was first published. *New Beginnings* owes a great debt to Orwell’s inspiration, as it does to Milosz’s *Captive Mind* and the novels of Victor Serge, such as *The Case of Comrade Tulayev*. One of our goals in publishing *New Beginnings* is to introduce a new generation to this tradition of independent radical thought which both the neo-cons and the advocates of pseudo-left wing “antiimperialism” regard as their most dangerous opponents. Indeed, we hope we are.

Empire and imperialism are not terms of abuse but an accurate, historically justified label for the external policy of the United States going back well into the 19th century. Of course, as Chalmers Johnson points out, globalization has become the euphemism of choice for imperialism, but when NY Times foreign editor Tom Friedman (an enthusiast for globalization) tells us that the American military is the “fist” which guarantees the

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globalization of American capitalism, we know we are dealing with a pure imperialist pattern.

There is a long and honorable tradition of conservative (read liberal in the old fashioned sense of the term) opposition to American imperialism, starting in the late 19th century. These, anti-statist and antimilitarist liberals, understood that imperialism and democracy were incompatible as, indeed, we can recognize today. Conservative Arthur Ekirch, Jr.'s books, *The Decline of American Liberalism* and *The Civilian and the Military* tells this story about “new” (statist, imperialist and militaristic) liberalism. Ivan Eland's *The Empire Has No Clothes*, published by the libertarian **Independent Institute**, continues this tradition. The liberal John Hobson's early 20th century book on “Imperialism” was an annoying reminder to American liberal Cold Warriors that there are at least two liberal traditions. American liberalism and democratic institutions became the main victims of Cold War anti-Communism when the national security state was constructed at the beginning of the Cold War under the administration of Democratic President Harry Truman.

THE STRANGE DEATH OF LIBERALISM IN AMERICA

To make sense of the world today, to understand why there is a “black hole” that shapes or misshapes American politics, requires us to understand that one of the main victims of the Cold War, for which Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. was a major intellectual spokesperson, has been American liberalism itself.

I remember asking Schlesinger, at a conference in London in the mid-1990s, why, of all the notable liberals in America, only he and John Kenneth Galbraith had strongly criticized the policy that destroyed the living standard of the Russian people and undermined the emergence of a democratic opposition movement. Schlesinger had called for a New Deal for Russia and denounced “shock therapy.” Schlesinger's only answer to me was a nod of agreement, a resigned recognition that American liberalism had fallen into a total political abyss by the time the great struggle between democracy and totalitarianism was finally resolved as a triumphant victory for The West. In light of current events, as we contemplate the ruins of democracy in Russia we can rightly exclaim “some victory!”—trillions of dollars later, etc. and, look, the former Soviet secret policeman, Putin, takes charge and a new Cold War is in the making.

The death of liberalism has been a major factor in creating a wasteland in American politics, one which permitted a Democratic president, Bill Clinton, to dismantle the New Deal welfare state and to lead the fight to pass NAFTA (devastatingly documented in Jeff Faux's book, *The Global Class War*)—all of this arose as a consequence of the Cold War shift to the right that rendered traditional liberalism an impotent and incoherent force—domestically, as well as in foreign policy. A kind of desiccated liberalism, as found in Robert Reich's simple-minded tracts, is all that is left. With global capitalism and the transformation of the America economy and class structure, nothing remains of the social basis of the democratic vision of historical American liberalism in the modern world. The “old middle class” no longer exists as a serious force, the American economy is

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dominated by (Robert Reich's name for it) "SuperCapitalism" that cannot be put back in the national regulatory bottle, and the permanent war economy/national security state will have to be dismantled in order to reconstruct democracy. John Kenneth Galbraith tried valiantly but in the end gave up, he even considering at one point, as Michael Harrington confided to me, joining the Democratic Socialists of America! Little surprise that he gave the British edition of Harrington's last book, *Socialism – Past and Future* (1989), a positive front-cover blurb. In his trajectory, Galbraith was following the pattern set down by the founder of modern American liberalism, John Dewey, who rediscovered himself as a democratic socialist in the 1930s. I can't help but add, in a spirit of hope, that perhaps history will repeat itself in the 21st century, given the manifest debacle of democratic liberalism, whose values remain valid even while the world they were based on has vanished. C. Wright Mills explained all of this fifty years ago in one of his most insightful essays, "Liberal Values in the Modern World", found in Mills' collected essays, and first published in *Anvil and Student Partisan*, of which I was a young editor in 1951.

Liberalism's collapse was compounded by the liberals' adherence to the Democratic Party. The successful civil rights movement, led by Martin Luther King, Jr., required a break with the Democratic Party, which was then based on an unholy alliance of liberals and southern white supremacists, whose unchallenged seniority gave them decisive power over American politics, including prohibiting voting rights for Southern African-Americans and enforcing "Jim Crow". Roosevelt's shameful record of not supporting anti-lynching legislation is sufficient evidence of the rotten bargain that underpinned the great Democratic coalition. The Vietnam war temporarily finished the liberal alliance with the Democratic party off: the anti-war movement was forced to break with Lyndon Johnson and his successor ("Mr. Liberal") Hubert Humphrey. But unable to formulate an alternative foreign policy, one based on democratic principles and economic and social justice, liberals resumed their support for the brand of anti-communism practiced by the Cold Warriors—indeed, some liberals turned themselves into the best Cold Warriors, and gave up on a coherent economic program, once the force of the civil rights movement had spent itself.

The subsequent hollowing out of the American labor movement was a concomitant of the death of liberalism in the Cold War. The AFL-CIO's single-minded subordination to the bankrupt, sterile anti-Communist policies of the Cold Warriors, along with its shameful collaboration with the CIA, was an act of political suicide. The labor movement could no longer function as a defender of the interests of American workers, while simultaneously it collaborated with corporate globalizers and played the game of the Cold Warriors on the international front. Had there been a powerful, independent labor movement— independent, that is, of the Democratic Party and the national security state—there might have been a real political response from labor as to the upheavals that shook the Soviet Empire from 1953 to 1956 to 1968 and later, in the 1980s, with the rise of Solidarity in Poland.

Even the coldest of the Cold Warriors—some of them, at least—admit that Solidarity was the key to the downfall of the Soviet empire, not the arms race, which threatened nuclear

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annihilation. In short, a democratic movement from below, as epitomized by Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia and Solidarity in Poland, might have brought about an earlier and more democratic end to the cold war in the captive nations of Central and Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union itself. Had this happened, history would be different.

Such a possibility, however, is definitely not the outcome that the cold warriors wished to see. (See our earlier point about the overthrow in the name of “anti-communism” of the democratic socialist Allende in Chile.) As early as the East German workers’ uprising in 1953 and the Hungarian revolution in 1956, Cold Warriors made it clear that the latent emergence of a democratic socialist movement, one that might, indeed, infect the Western working class, was a fate to be avoided at all costs. Even when the crude version of “totalitarianism” which depicted a society without internal contradictions, especially none based on class conflict, was shredded by historic events, such as the Hungarian Revolution and the rise of Solidarity, the dominant Cold War paradigm was one of a seamless, unopposable system. The stubbornness with which this view was held in official circles and unquestioned by most liberals explains the complete surprise with which the collapse of the Soviet system was greeted.

John Lewis Gaddis tells a revealing story about a meeting at a Washington foreign policy institute in 1985. After several hours of discussion about relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, Gaddis writes, “I very tentatively raised my hand and asked whether we should not be looking ahead to the possibility that the Cold War might someday end: should we not give some thought to how we would like it to do so, and to what might then replace it? An embarrassing silence ensued, broken finally by this observation from a highly respected senior diplomat: Oh, it hadn’t occurred to us that it would ever end.” [See the chapter on “Civil Society, Democracy and the Cold War” in my book, *Political Parties and Democracy*, London 1996.] Remember this anecdote when you read about the new “long war”.

Anyone who traveled in Eastern Europe in the 1980s, as I did, to meet with the democratic opposition, found that even the officials of the Stalinist regimes knew as early as the mid-1980s that the system was collapsing. I have a vivid memory of a Hungarian Warsaw Pact general, who I met in 1985 at a peace seminar at a British university, telling me that Soviet domination of its satellite countries was impossible to sustain. When the next uprising took place in Hungary, he said, “the Russians aren’t coming.” In short, the Russian ability to sustain its empire by force was over and, therefore, so was the Cold War, for which that force was the main justification. None of this was a secret, of course. The truth was just unacceptable because it was inconsistent with the dominant Cold War formula whereby an arms race and threat of outside aggressive force was the only possible way to end the Cold War—even if that meant ending the world itself in a thermonuclear conflagration. “Crackpot realism”, as C. Wright Mills called this world view, inhabited the deepest recesses of the Cold War liberal mind.

The neo-conservatives have their roots in this strain of liberalism. For those who know, it’s not at all hard to recognize the mind-set, especially as some of same actors who beat the drum for “the present danger” then, today inhabit the offices of the National

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Endowment for Democracy and even they even publish a *Journal of Democracy*, in which the political parameters of what they call the Long War are developed. Needless to say, their idea of “democracy” has nothing to do with the kind of democracy this journal, *New Beginnings*, espouses.

COLD WAR’S ROLE IN FREE MARKET GLOBALISM

In practice, of course, the Cold War was all about installing “free markets” in as many foreign countries as possible, all the while avoiding, by all means possible, any variety of radical, democratic change from below, especially a democratic socialist economic change, by the ordinary people. It even came to be given a name: the “Sonnenfeldt Doctrine” after Henry Kissinger’s deputy—Sonnenfeldt denied his paternity, but there is no question that it was the underlying premise of the Cold Warriors’ strategy. [See the fascinating remarks on this issue by James Michener in his book on the Hungarian Revolution.] NATO, for those who know its history, advocated, alongside an armed defense of Europe, a free market capitalist revolution from above. Democratic socialism or social democracy – even New Deal liberalism, as Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. was to learn, was unthinkable, because undesirable, leaving the free market as the only viable fruit of decades-long conflict. In the end, to over-simplify enormously, the elimination of this other possibility—the road not taken—is what happened, and this is why we have the world we have today.

Naomi Klein, who has the advantage of being a Canadian social democrat and member of the New Democratic Party, puts the foregoing point with great clarity in her excellent book, *The Shock Doctrine*: “Washington has always regarded democratic socialism as a greater threat than totalitarian Communism, which was easy to vilify and made for a handy enemy. In the sixties and seventies, the favored tactic for dealing with the inconvenient popularity of developmentalism and democratic socialism was to try to equate them with Stalinism, deliberately blunting the clear differences between the worldviews. (Conflating all opposition with terrorism plays a similar role today.)”

As for Allende’s overthrow, Klein quotes Henry Kissinger who wrote in a 1970 memo to Nixon, in words that reflect the Cold Warriors’ views of Eastern Europe and Russia as well, that “The example of a successful elected Marxist government in Chile would surely have an impact on—and precedent value for—other parts of the world, especially in Italy; the initiative spread of similar phenomena elsewhere would in turn significantly affect the world balance and our own position in it.” “In other words” Klein remarks, “Allende would have to be taken out before his democratic third way spread.”

Kissinger’s advice to Nixon confirms the analysis set forth in this essay and is testimony from the mouth of the enemy, of the potential power of another “third way,” just as applicable today, as it was then.

By the 1980s any chance of a democratic socialist or social democratic transformation was lost— ordinary people in Eastern Europe, fed up by years of frustration, desiring “freedom” from the stifling bureaucratic police-state which came to be known as “really

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existing socialism”, could only understand freedom in the free market economy, and so, to quote the title of one quite serious book on Poland, written by two otherwise intelligent Western economists, the people thought they wanted and could actually get “capitalism without the state”, a crackpot idea if there ever was one. Capitalism cannot exist without the state and there has never been nor ever will there ever be such a capitalism. No wonder Mrs. Thatcher was greeted as a hero by Polish members of Solidarity—the same Mrs. Thatcher who had broken the miners’ union in Britain; to them, she represented freedom—now translated into the “free market” or what came to be called “neo-liberalism”.

SHOCK THERAPY BURSTS THE UTOPIAN BUBBLE

The fantasy of stateless capitalism and of free markets gave way, in the 1990s, to “shock therapy” in Russia. As the living standards of the Russia people collapsed, along with life expectancy itself, so did popular enthusiasm for democratic politics wane; in this desperate climate, support for authoritarianism, even a revived Communist Party, grew. A group of Russia trade unionists I met in the early 1990s explained it thusly: “Well you know, [electro] shock therapy destroys the memory.” And so it did.

The KGB regime that eventually emerged from the turmoil of the Yeltsin years and this climate of desperation was the product of shock therapy policy, a policy that had the enthusiastic support of many American liberals or at least their acquiescence. The Putin regime was not inevitable nor was the attempt to re-establish Russian power in the “near abroad”. A different European Union with different policies and without its effective merger with NATO might have made a difference in helping a democratic opposition to Yeltsin and then Putin to emerge as a strong force in Russia.

By this time, the American right had succeed in making the “L” word (liberal) a curse word (now we have only have progressives), and so scored one of their greatest political triumphs. Bill Clinton, along with his advisor, Strobe Talbot, supported shock therapy as designed by another liberal thinker, Jeffrey Sachs. Only now, thanks to Naomi Klein’s, magnificent book, *Shock Doctrine* is the record being set straight about Sachs achievement in Russia—along with the support from advocates of the free market theorists, under Milton Friedman and the Chicago Boys, of Pinochet’s murderous regime in Chile.

“Freedom” it seems, comes at a price: in Russia, the price of freedom is mass (unnecessary) suffering and the destruction of democratic possibilities. In Chile, the price of freedom came in the form of the deaths and disappearances of thousands of opponents of “freedom”.

Echoes of the Communist motto about breaking eggs to make an omelet, or the latest version of this idea, come in the euphemism employed by current advocates of change from above: staging, defined as democracy by degrees, found in academic publications and “journals of democracy” as well as in books on “fixing broken states.” One unstable idea gives way to another, as it has in the words of Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice:

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authoritarian capitalism as a pre-requisite for the emergence of real democratic capitalism. Shoot workers and imprison trade unionists (South Korea for example where the graveyards are full of their bodies) and all will be well in time. [When I first heard these ideas out of the mouths of ideologues of the World Bank at a post-Cold War seminar in Prague, I thought for a moment that they might have been at one time students of the late Paul Baran, a non-party Stalinist thinker, or authoritarian third worldists or fellow-travelers of the Communist Party, or apologists for Castro, or, in the long distant past, members in their youth of the Labor Youth League where this version of socialism or economic development from above was common in the 1950s.]

Along with shock therapy came the expansion of NATO, into the periphery of the former Soviet Union, and the creation of an active American military presence in countries such as Georgia, where we now see installation of a missile defense system for Poland and the Czech Republic. At the time of the NATO expansion, a military and economically weakened Russia could only feebly protest. Once again, because of the absence of a party of opposition in America, NATO expansion was decided with virtually no discussion and no opposition from Congress. It was taken as a *fait accompli*—the very circumstance that the late George Kennan warned would have most disastrous consequences for the future of world peace as the events in Georgia have demonstrated.

MILITARY FORCE OFFERS NO SOLUTION TO SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC WOES

Sometimes, in a moment of whimsy, I imagine that President George W. Bush, along with most of the political elite of both parties, sat at the feet of Black Panther, Huey Newton, and learned from him when he preached (following Chairman Mao) what was probably the stupidest sermon ever preached: “All Power flows from the barrel of a gun.”

Paul Krugman now writes of “the messes” in Iraq and Afghanistan, as “symptoms of a much broader cancer in American foreign policy.” The cancer is the reliance on military force to address problems whose roots are social and economic. You can’t, Krugman solemnly reminds us, bomb global warming. But, we might remind him, the new nuclear arms race, upon which this country has embarked, could cause a global winter that, after all, would be a kind of solution to global warming. Given the level of American politics and that of the present Presidential incumbent, such an awful, even if sarcastic, thought ought not to be said too loudly.

However, we remember when “Star Wars” was seriously put forward by President Reagan, as a way to guarantee world peace; the current renewal of “missile defense” is justified by the same kind of reasoning. And then there are the deep thinkers who have urged universal nuclear weapons as a way of guaranteeing peace. “Mutually assured destruction” would work, as in the Cold War policy, to assure nuclear peace. This is evidence that there is no limit to the depths to which the deep thinkers who shape American politics can sink—until, of course, their theories are disproved and the world is blown up. In the real world of American (and Russian) politics today, despite the end of the Cold War, such thinking continues.

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**THE GREAT EXCEPTION—AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE COLD WAR; THE
EXAMPLE OF EUROPEAN NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT (END)**

We have taken note of the internal upheavals in East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland that shook the Soviet Empire and that have, with a different political leadership in the West, have ended the Cold War without the threat of nuclear war. At this point we want only to note the rise of a movement in Europe which even had American supporters in the 1980s. It was found in the German Green Party—the late Petra Kelly’s name comes to mind for her outstanding leadership—and, most notably, in Britain, in the “European Nuclear Disarmament Movement” (END) founded and led by the historian, Edward P. Thompson and Mary Kaldor.

END’s views, found in the pamphlets and books written by Thompson, were to oppose the cold war and the nuclear arms race in both the Soviet Union and the United States – “neither Washington nor Moscow” might well have been its slogan. END recognized that Eastern Europe was under the totalitarian military domination of the Soviet Union which insisted that its satellites be armed with nuclear weapons and be part of the Warsaw Pact armies confronting NATO armies in Western Europe. END opposed both NATO and the Warsaw Pact, as well as the intensified nuclear arms race launched by Ronald Reagan in the 1980’s, demanding that cruise missiles be withdrawn from Western Europe and Eastern Europe both. (By contrast, the conventional pro-Communist western peace movement only opposed the western arms race and justified the Soviet policy as a matter of “self-defense”—this “peace” movement is most accurately described as led by Eastern Cold Warriors.)

Most importantly, in defiance of the dominant political paradigm of the time, END reached out actively to its counterparts in Eastern Europe and even in Russia, where the independent peace and democracy movement was, of course, struggling for the democratic right to oppose the armaments race perpetrated by its own ruling class. END’s contribution was to link the struggle for democracy and human rights in Eastern Europe with peace. Peace and an end to the arms race thus depended on opening up space for democratic movements of opposition to rise up in Eastern Europe, movements that proposed unilateral steps toward disarmament in the West.

This remarkable movement had a far greater impact than the conventional historians of the Cold War would wish to recognize. An account may be found in the important but largely unknown publication of *Helsinki Watch Report*, headed by Aryeh Neier and Jeri Leber, *From Below: Independent Peace and Environmental Movements in Eastern Europe and the USSR* (October 1987).

In the United States, a small, but effective group, *The Campaign for Peace and Democracy*, led by the indefatigable Joanne Landy, worked with END. Another invaluable source of information was the independent magazine *Across Frontiers*, edited and published in America by Peter Rossman, to carry the message of human rights and environmental degradation and their importance to the peace movement, East and West.

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Jan Kavan's *East European Reporter* was yet another publication to carry the message of opposition to the Cold War across the barrier of the Iron Curtain.

I was a member and supporter of both END and the Campaign. Indeed the key idea in this Journal and the Center for Peace and Democracy may be said to have been learned from these movements: the idea of creating a peace movement—a movement for social change from below—first in the U.S., in the “belly of the beast”, and then around the world, where such movements can find and work with and encourage new counterparts, in the face of pressure and repression, to create a peaceful political challenge to the status quo. We see this in Israel, for example, where the small but brave Israeli peace movement embodied in *Gush Shalom* (“The Other Israel”) reaches out to its Palestinian counterparts. The Geneva Accord was an outstanding example of this approach to solving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The framework for peace it proposed remains valid to this day.

The Geneva Accord set an example of what might be done, for example, by an American peace movement which worked with its counterparts in Iran to oppose the nuclear arming of Iran in the context of a nuclear free Middle East and the de-nuclearization of the United States. The function of the kind of gross caricature of the internal Iranian political system common in the U.S. today is exactly parallel to the crude totalitarian model for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe during the Cold War: to shut out any alternative thinking about creating political space for change. Interestingly enough, the strongest case for this latter approach to Iran can be found in the writings of some conservative critics of America's present-day policy as well in the proposals of the Iranian opposition. Needless to say, none of this penetrates today's present day election debate about Iran. Real diplomatic conversation with the Iranian regime must be better than saber rattling and bombing, but it will not directly help to create the kind of independent, democratic opposition within Iran—or the United States—that is needed for the nurturing of a lasting regional peace.

Note that the stress is on independent—not tied to nor the creatures of parties or governments or intelligence agencies of any country. We will have occasion in future issues to return to this notion, and explore how to develop this approach in today's world, citing and providing links to such groups, whether in Russia or in the Czech Republic, or in Britain and Germany, or even in China. The internet is a remarkable tool that can be used to great effect. The recent announcement of a forthcoming International Labor Conference in Iraq demonstrates the potency of our methodology of building a peace movement from below. (Learn more at www.workerstoday.com/english/.) An independent, democratic, labor movement is obviously a vital component of this approach. We will report further in future issues on this important development.

COMING TO A CONCLUSION AND A NEW BEGINNING -- -- FINDING THE VOICE OF THE “OTHER AMERICA” AND TAKING THE ROAD NOT TRAVELED

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In this introductory article we have covered a lot of ground in order to give our new readers some idea of who we are and what we think—and most important of all, how we think about the crisis that confronts us. Our purpose is not academic: this history is vital toward an understanding of why we are where we are now, and to help us think about alternative American foreign policies today. If we allow it, the same absence of an opposition—the ever present and powerful black-hole—will shape the future of the entire world and perhaps lead to a military confrontation and nuclear arms race with China. On the other hand, if we learn the lessons of the past, we may have a chance of avoiding a repeat of history, and find an alternative to confrontation with China, as well as with a revived Russia.

I can't attempt here to discuss in depth the implications of the rise of China: surely this is one of the most important developments confronting the world today. China is a police-state run by a single party. No opposition parties are allowed and organized freedom of speech is severely restricted. Free speech without freedom of association, as the First Amendment recognizes, is not free speech at all. Still, there is enormous pressure from below for change: unofficial strikes are widespread even while the All China Federation of Trade Unions works as a mechanism of regime control over the workers. Independent trade unions are what the regime most fears—a Chinese version of Poland's Solidarity in the 1970s and 1980s. There is a widespread belief propagated by academics and politicians corrupted by Chinese money (see Ken Silverstein's important article in a recent *Harpers*) and businessmen eager to invest in China (so that they can reap the benefits of an exploited labor force without unions), that with "capitalism" will come, automatically as it were, democracy and a free trade union movement. We don't believe that for a minute and even the question of what defines "capitalism" in China requires some deeper exploration. In future issues we will be spending a lot of time discussing what is going on in China and will present contributions from the advocates of independent trade unions in China. The important point now, however, is that how the U.S. responds to developments in China will, literally, determine the fate of the world. An arms race with a militarized China, possessing nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them, is a fearful but realistic prospect. As in the case of the Cold War and, now its renewal with Russia, the kind of response from America will depend on the how the black-hole is filled; that is, whether an alternative policy and the movement to realize it comes into existence. Nothing could be more important to the future of peace in the world.

In the opening paragraphs of this essay we mentioned the important role that a revitalized global labor movement could play. I was a founder in the 1990s in London of a labor organization (*Labour and Society International* [LSI]) supported by the international labor movement. We worked with unionists in Eastern Europe to help develop an independent labor movement there, and we also worked with trade unionists from South Korea, South Africa, Zimbabwe, as well as Western Europe. I was privileged to teach a program on behalf of LSI for group of trade unionists from developing countries at the ILO school in Milan in the 1990s. And in the early 1990s I attended in Caracas one of the most impressive meetings I have ever seen: the first post-cold war conference of what was then called the International Confederation of Trade Unions. The conference

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represented a reunited labor movement, one that had been divided by the cold war. Representatives of eighty-five million workers were present.

Such a global labor movement can provide the structural basis for the kind of world citizenship I advocated earlier. (The spirit of Tom Paine was, I am sure, present in Caracas.) In future issues of *New Beginnings* we will be paying special attention to the global labor movement and provide a link to Eric Lee's amazing *Labour Start*, a project which had its origins at LSI. Labour Start links trade unionists in over a hundred countries and translates its services into many languages. These trade unionists often join in common action against their common employers. Global capital meets global labor! A movement for peace and democracy must be an integral part of a global labor movement. Far from being utopian, then, a movement for global citizenship is a realistic possibility, a necessity, one indeed, that already exists to an extent in the international labor movement.

A CONCLUSION, FOR NOW

We believe that the overwhelming majority of Americans do not accept the inevitability of developments, such as we see happening in Georgia, or, if they are made aware of what is happening in China's relations with the U.S., that conflict is inevitable. We are confident that many people understand that reactionary movements, using terrorist tactics and espousing ideologies that justify terror and the reality of a new nuclear arms race, can only be addressed through reviving, strengthening and practicing democratic policy and principles, and by supporting movements for social and economic justice beyond the shibboleths of the "free market".

In the *Center for Global Peace and Democracy* and *the Alameda Public Affairs Forum* we believe we have created one model of what needs to be done in this country to inform and educate citizens about the world, about the nation, about local government, and about democracy. Education, reason, and intelligence, as John Dewey pointed out many years ago, are the foundation stones of democratic self-government.

Let it be said again loudly and clearly: the crisis in America and the rest of the world is a political crisis, as well as, we must add, given the crisis in the natural world, a bioethical crisis. Fifty years of the Cold War did not win peace and democracy: it created the wasteland in which retrograde anti-humanistic ideologies and movements have grown, and history has shown that such movements cannot be bombed out of existence. Rather, the social and economic conditions that gave rise to them and continue to nourish them must be eradicated by a popular democratic movement from below—one that can realize the hope and facilitate relief to an overwhelming planetary majority that lacks even the basics of life: clean water, medical care, food and housing and a secure natural environment. Americans need to reach out to their counterparts—in Europe, "old" and "new"; in Latin America (where there is promising ferment); in Asia—in order to build a world wide movement from below for peace and democracy.

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New Beginnings will publish articles and reviews that critically analyze current events and explore that way that was identified, earlier in the article, as the road not taken during the Cold War years: democracy and social change from below. Movements are made because people of like mind join together and move together. Movements that result in the creation of parties can only be based on egalitarian membership marked by real participation, rather than what we might well describe as a top-down, plebiscitarian organizations. The internet is a powerful tool for exchanging ideas, but the ideas need to be exchanged at all levels, not from a top “spokesperson” who tells us how we should react to a happening and that we need to demonstrate or write letters, just because that spokesperson has told us we should. If we act in harmony, it should be because we all understand the issues at stake and we all agree together on a way to begin toward the necessary solutions.

Our good friend, the late Michael Harrington, said it best:

There is a need for a global solidarity, a sense of world citizenship. I am under no illusions that such a consciousness is the work of a year, or even a decade. Its emergence, if in fact it is to be achieved, will take place during a historic epoch. And it will not come into existence through exhortation.... The politics of international economic and social solidarity must be presented as a practical solution to immediate problems, as well as a recognition of [the] oneness of humankind.

Launching a journal that can address the intellectual and political challenge posed by this crisis is a daunting task. Merely listing some of the salient elements that make up the crisis is sufficient to show how large is our task, in the face of the dangerous situation the world confronts. Global warming and the renewal of an arms race are life and death matters. In our view, the failure to adequately address these matters are a result of a massive default in American politics. Because of the power of the United States, the black-hole mis-shapes politics throughout the world. Believing that there is only one America (the America of Bush and Cheney) leads our friends in the rest of the world to despair of resisting the American superpower. These crucial global matters are not inevitable, as some people might fatalistically claim, but they can only be addressed by the rebirth of a political vision based on social and economic justice.

One thing is certain: if we are alarmed and disagree with what is going on, we must not remain silent. We must find our voices and speak, we must talk and share ideas; we must be prepared to educate ourselves in ways we have not done, and to organize ourselves with people of like mind. We must prepare ourselves to oppose what we know to be wrong, and be ready to explore solutions that adhere to the democratic principles on which our country was founded.

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sociology from UCLA (1955) and then studied under Professor Seymour Martin Lipset at the University of California, Berkeley, where he received a Ph.D. in political sociology in 1969. He taught at a number of institutions of higher education, the last of which was Birkbeck College and the Institute of United States Studies at the University of London. He has published four books, including “Authoritarian Socialism”; “Political Parties and Democracy”; “Neither Capitalism nor Socialism: Theories of Bureaucratic Collectivism” (co-edited with Ernest Haberkern); The Other City (co-edited with Susanne MacGregor). He is a founder of “Charter 88”, the British constitutional reform movement which proposes a democratic Bill of Rights for Britain. He was formerly Director of the Michael Harrington Center at Birkbeck College and then co-founding director of Labour and Society International in London. Together with his wife, Gretchen Lipow, he co-founded the Alameda Public Affairs Forum in 2004 and the Center for Global Peace and Democracy in 2007. He now lives in Alameda, California, where he is currently writing a book on the future of American politics.