

**Maurice Saatchi**

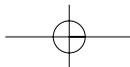
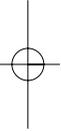
**Sleeping Beauty:**

**Awakening the American  
Dream**

*Summer Address*

**POLITEIA**

**A FORUM FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC THINKING**



# POLITEIA:

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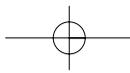
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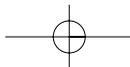
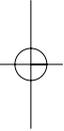
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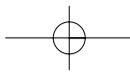
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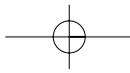
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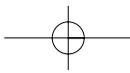
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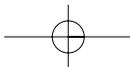
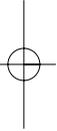
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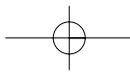




## The Author

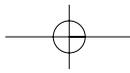
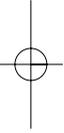
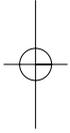
Maurice Saatchi co-founded Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising in 1970 and is now a partner in M&C Saatchi. He was elevated to the peerage in 1996. Lord Saatchi served as Conservative Shadow Minister in the House of Lords for the Treasury and the Cabinet Office 1999-2001. He was Co-Chairman of the Conservative Party from 2003-2005.





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# I

## Introduction

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*There is nothing either good or bad,  
But thinking makes it so.*

Hamlet

As America celebrates its independence day, many Americans may be perplexed and confused about the way their country is perceived worldwide. Accusations against America have grown into a global phenomenon, crossing borders, classes, religions, and generations. As a result they, like Josef K in Kafka's *The Trial*, may feel that 'someone must have laid false accusations ... because one morning he was arrested without having done anything wrong'.

Looking across the Atlantic we might well ask what would happen if the Statue of Liberty came to life? Would she weep? She had been a gift from one radical revolutionary nation to another, a vanguard force. But is she now, as the critics contend a mere defender of the established status quo? She had been seen as a beacon of hope for the world. But now, according to the US Government, she had become the world's No. 1 terrorist target.

The American poet Emma Lazarus hailed her inauguration as the 'New Colossus', with the message few Americans could forget: 'Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free'. Now the poet's words do not move all who hear. Now 64,900,000 internet sites respond to the keyword 'anti-America'. In Nigeria, the most popular name for baby boys this year is Osama. In the majority of countries, the majority of people think America's influence on their country is bad. Millions have lost hope in America. Millions more actively wish it harm. Anti-Americanism has become a conspicuous feature of the age.

America may be innocent of all these charges. Yet she must have done *something* wrong: recent global opinion polls have found strong anti-American feeling around the world – including among some of America's friends and allies. A Eurobarometer

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survey<sup>1</sup> found that America was seen as the greatest threat to world peace, along with Iran. *Newsweek* reports that most countries polled believe that China would act more responsibly in the world than the United States. Even in the UK, 55 per cent of respondents said they view the United States as a threat to global peace. In France, while a 1988 survey rated 'power', 'dynamism', 'wealth', and 'liberty' as the words most frequently associated with American society, by 1996 the top choices had become 'violence', 'power', 'inequalities' and 'racism'.

The phenomenon is worldwide. In 34 of 43 countries polled in 2002, a majority of people said they disliked America's influence on their country.<sup>2</sup> In the quarter of humanity known as the Muslim world, anti-US hostility is at fever pitch. A Pew Trust research poll in 2005 concluded that anti-Americanism is deeper and broader than at any time in modern history.<sup>3</sup> Why?

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<sup>1</sup> Nye, J. S. 'The Decline of America's Soft Power, Why Washington Should Worry' in *Foreign Affairs*, May / June 2004, Vol. 83, No. 3, 2004, pp. 16-20.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* and Walt, S. M., *Taming American Power*. in *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2005, Vol. 84, No. 5, 2005, pp. 105-120.

<sup>3</sup> The Pew Trust, *Trends 2005: A look at changes in American life*, Chapter 6, 'The Global Spread of Anti-Americanism', 2005.

## II

### Anti-Americanism – The Problem

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*America is great because it is good.  
When it ceases to be good it ceases to be great.*  
Alexis de Tocqueville 1835

Anti-Americanism comes from a number of different, but related, objections – a resistance to economic capitalism; an objection to cultural imperialism; a rejection of its foreign policy; a moral objection to its role and nature as a world leader. Thus America's critics assemble their complaints against the Pax Americana, what William Kristol and Robert Kagan called America's 'benevolent global hegemony'.<sup>4</sup>

#### America's Economic System

*Love of money.* Many of America's critics object to its economic system, capitalism, and its uses. The more money America has, the more dissatisfied people have become with the results. People ask: 'If America is so rich, why doesn't it solve the problems of poverty? If it can't, it is not omnipotent. If it won't, it is not good'. When America replaced Britain as the world's No. 1, it inherited the envy of the impoverished masses. Seen from the viewpoint of Marx's economic determinism, Islamic Jihadism against America owes more to *Das Kapital* than to the Koran. Marx predicted and demanded a radical transformation, 'one great cleansing act'. Today's enemies of America want the same.

Marx provided the angry, the miserable, the poor, the discontented with a specific enemy – the capitalist exploiters, the bourgeoisie. He proclaimed a Holy War which gave the poor and the exploited not only hope, but something specific to do: 'Organization for ruthless war: with the prospect of blood, sweat and tears, of battles, death and perhaps temporary defeats; but, above all, the guarantee of a happy ending to the story'. Today's enemies of America feel the same.

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<sup>4</sup> Kristol, W and Kagan, R, 'Towards a neo-reaganite foreign policy'. Foreign Affairs, July 2005.

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In the meantime, surveys show that most Americans think America is just a scapegoat for the mistakes and failures of other countries. It is true that by comparison with America, everyone is a failure. Americans have more of everything. Even America's friends suffer from schadenfreude. Why wouldn't they, when America accounts for seven of the top ten investment banks, eight of the top ten companies etc. As Philip Larkin observed, some people are just too lucky. They get 'the fame and the girl and the money. All at one sitting'. Which might not be so bad if it were not for American...

*Stinginess.* Not only is the American capitalist system seen as wrong, but critics say the US fails to use its fruits generously. Absolute figures to measure countries' generosity are less significant than the proportion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), i.e. national wealth that a country devotes to foreign aid. On that league table, the US ranks 22nd of the 22 most developed nations. As former President Jimmy Carter commented, 'We are the stingiest nation of all'. Denmark is top of the table, giving 1.01 per cent of GDP, while the US manages just 0.1 per cent. America is said to think it cheaper to pay for defence against the rage of the poor, than to pay to alleviate their poverty. President Clinton gave some credence to this view when explaining that Afghanistan was a cheap war – only \$1bn a month. As he said, 'At this rate, America could go on with this war ... forever'.

*Irresponsibility.* Linked to the criticism of the US economic system is the accusation that it dispenses its riches in an irresponsible way. They say that America, the richest country, with the cheapest petrol, is the world's greatest polluter. Yet it asks for tough environmental regimes for developing countries. Why? To saddle them with costly regulations, they say, that neutralize their competitive advantage of cheap labour. As every schoolchild knows, with 4 per cent of the world's population, the US represents 25 per cent of the world's oil consumption and produces 25 per cent of the world's carbon-dioxide emissions. For America's critics, that is enough said.

*Free v state markets.* No longer is the western capitalist system seen as necessary to generate wealth. US economists contend that it is not

possible for a state-controlled enterprise to thrive – bureaucracy dulls its competitive edge. But China is apparently achieving the impossible – thriving businesses, 100 per cent state-owned, proudly flying the Red Flag in their boardrooms. They even have a name for it. They call it ‘state capitalism’, or ‘capitalism with Chinese characteristics’. China’s rise to prominence appears to challenge deep American ideology. It defies many of the classic US economics textbooks.

American presidents used to reserve their main critique of Communism for its economic failure to deliver prosperity – as President Reagan said of Soviet Russia ‘It is in deep economic difficulty. The rate of growth in the national product has been steadily declining since the fifties and is less than half of what it was then’. But this doesn’t seem to apply to China. Economists say China will soon overtake America as the World’s No 1. China’s use of what Joseph Nye called ‘soft power’ has, according to polls taken by the Program on International Policy Attitudes and the BBC, led majorities of people in most countries to consider China a more positive influence and less of a threat to international peace than America. As *Newsweek* recently put it, ‘As anti-Americanism grows, China is beating the United States at its own game’.

### **American Culture**

America is seen as unfit for the cultural influence she yields worldwide. Lacking the sophistication to recognise that weakness, she is also seen as arrogant.

*Vulgarity.* While the poor dislike the rich, the cultivated poor dislike rich barbarians. Paul Hollander cites an article on American air bases in Britain which appeared in *Sanity* in the 1960s, a publication of the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. It displays, he says, the characteristic components of anti-Americanism in Britain and in Western Europe. The scene is the officer’s mess at Mildenhall where ‘a champagne brunch is laid on... a young pilot clad in a very zippy flying suit festooned with bright badges, flashes, emblems ... sits at a table covered with fine linen eating a giant cream puff with a silver fork. He has champagne ... and ... cream

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cake and, as he quaffs ... he is deeply absorbed in the pages of a child's comic'. As Hollander says, this sketch of the American barbarian is a classic of the genre, 'There he is, the uncouth American oblivious to fine linen and silver fork, in the heart of Britain where he clearly doesn't belong. He is the stereotypical childlike American absorbed in comics ... Not only does he offend good taste but this immature creature wields awesome power: he flies the machines of destruction'.

For European intellectuals, the term 'American culture' is an oxymoron. Bertrand Russell contrasted America's material wealth with its spiritual poverty. He wrote of 'The garish vulgarity of American civilization... its cheerless luxury'.

How did all this mockery of American culture begin?

In the late 19th century, the 'degeneration theory' based on the work of Charles Darwin and others held that there was something inherently wrong with America that made animals there smaller, and people physically and mentally inferior. By the 1830s, the United States was a laboratory for a new type of country – no monarch, no aristocracy, no traditions, no religion, no rigid class system. It considered itself superior to the old European systems, which would be threatened if the American experiment worked. A contemporary French writer asked, 'Could this America, this other world looming on the horizon, be our own future? The United States projects on the screen of our future a universe of appalling ugliness'. In 1832, Frances Trollope, whose book *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, shaped European perceptions of America in the 19th century, observed that the greatest difference between England and the United States was 'want of refinement ... that polish which removes the coarser and rougher parts of our nature'.

In 1900, Uruguayan Jose Rodo wrote the definitive manifesto of Latin America. The title character, representing Latin America, personifies 'the noble, soaring aspect of the human spirit, spiritual in culture, vivacity and grace'. The United States is depicted as Caliban, who embodies the 'spirit of vulgarity.'

Today, to many of its critics, America means 'cultural imperialism'. Global US media are said to be paving over precious national identities with a homogenised US version of life. According to the English theatre critic, Ken Tynan, America makes people, 'sell their souls for a pot of message'. So critics high and low-brow link hands under the unlikely banner 'Join The Worldwide Movement Against Globalisation!'.

The French poet Baudelaire lamented in 1873 that humanity was hopelessly 'Americanised'. Since then, 'Americanisation' and 'American-style' have developed almost exclusively negative connotations – often combined with the adjective 'creeping', as in 'creeping Americanisation'. The term means the further development of despised trends – deterioration in the world of work, stress through job insecurity, work intensification, 'flexibility', 'mobility' etc. The phrase 'working vacation' testifies to the Americanisation of work.

*Arrogance.* Not only is the US seen as vulgar – she is seen as lacking the sophistication to know her limitations. A popular critique, embraced with particular relish by America's critics, is that American policy-makers are insensitive to foreign nations and especially those in the Third World. For example, Norwegian Nobel Laureate, Knut Hamsun found America, 'invincibly and smugly ignorant of foreign peoples and foreign achievements; a nation so taken with itself [that it] knows curiously little about others'.

It was the popular message of Lederer and Burdick's book, *The Ugly American*, that Americans abroad, and officials in particular, were cheerfully insensitive to the beliefs of the peoples they were seeking to patronise and defend from the Communist threat. The book created a stereotype of the average American. The novel's Ambassador Sears thinks of the natives as 'little monkeys'.

He could not find on a map the country in which he was given his diplomatic post as a political reward. He was among the American officials described by one of the articulate natives as people who were sent over to 'try to buy us like cattle'.

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## America's Foreign Policy

The critics object to US foreign policy. Although throughout the last century American interests have not invariably coincided with those of individual European powers, scepticism, often of a friendly nature, was matched by shared interests and common aims – for example, during the two World Wars and the Cold War.

But more recently anti-Americanism has served as a useful mobilising agent for a new European role as a new power bloc - an essential ingredient in the formation of a common European identity. Jean-Claude Trichet, for example, the Governor of the European Central Bank, has pointed out that America accounts for only 30 per cent of world trade, yet 70 per cent of the world's business is transacted in dollars. This injustice to the new European superpower would be put right by the Euro, he said.

*Too close to Israel.* At the same time, America's Middle East role, its apparent hostility to the Muslim world and support for Israel, prompts hostility. The *American Christian Science Monitor* recently asked, 'Why do they hate us?'. It answered that over the past year, Arab TV stations had broadcast countless pictures of Israeli soldiers shooting at Palestinian youths, Israeli tanks ploughing into Palestinian homes, Israeli helicopters rocketing Palestinian streets etc. 'And they know that the US sends more than \$3 billion a year in military and economic aid to Israel'. American support of Israel antagonises all those who seek to protect the Islamic heritage. Anti-American and anti-Israeli sentiment converge since both countries are seen as agents of modernisation and Westernisation. Europeans see America as a captive of the Israel lobby. Americans see European hostility to Israel as medieval anti-Semitism.

*Baffled by the mystery of Islam.* In any case the US approach to Islam appears too complicated for most Americans to understand. Whereas American Presidents felt able to criticise Communism itself – its entire philosophy – as the cause of poverty, today nobody would criticize Islam in the same way. It is Islamic terrorists, a tiny minority of malcontents, who are to blame for the insecurity of the world, not the whole philosophy of Islam. That difference makes America's

approach to Islam too complicated for most Americans. It is as if America said, during the Cold War, 'Communism is fine. But we don't like certain Russians'.

*Too much power.* American power is seen, by many, as resting too heavily on military power. American military expenditure is greater than the next nine countries in the world put together. Sir John Fisher, the head of the British Admiralty in Queen Victoria's reign, had his 'rule of twice', by which the British Navy would always be bigger than the next two countries' navies combined. Today, America spends more on arms than the rest of the world put together. This year's increase in US military expenditure is greater than the entire defence budget of the Eurozone. Hence, French Foreign Minister Vedrine's expression '*hyperpuissance*' – beyond superpower – to describe the 'hectoring hegemon'. Whereas other countries are willing to use the sofa and the coffee pot as a means of dialogue, 'GI Joe' prefers his 'sheriff strategy' – In Guns We Trust. To his critics, GI Joe is a trigger-happy warmonger, motivated by fear and loathing of his enemies, ready to destroy the planet.

*Incoherence.* US foreign policy appears incoherent to many critics, not least in America. To the modern American eye, the Cold War must seem a golden age. Then, America had a clear and simple foreign policy – 'deterrence', colloquially known as MAD: Mutual Assured Destruction. This kept the peace for fifty years – no country could attack America because it would be fearful of its own destruction. This compelling logic dissolved on 9/11 with the rise of suicidal individuals, for whom Mutual Assured Destruction was a blessing.

A new foreign policy was obviously required, and duly arrived. Unfortunately, there are several different versions, which do not help us to understand America's true motives easily. The starting-point is common to all – that what is at stake is the protection of US lives from the threat of Islamic terrorists, whose actions are seen as having different causes.

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## A Common Starting Point

- Q: What is the first duty of the American administration?*  
*A: To protect the lives of American citizens.*  
*Q: From where comes the threat to the lives of American citizens?*  
*A: From Islamic terrorists.*  
*Q: Why do Islamic terrorists threaten the lives of American citizens?*

## Different Answers: Pre-Emption

### Foreign Policy # 1

- Q. Why do Islamic terrorists threaten American citizens*  
*A. Who cares. Hit them before they hit you. As the First Lord of the Admiralty, Sir Jack Fisher, said about Britains' enemies in the 19th Century: 'Hit first, Hit hard! Keep on hitting'.*

### Result:

'Hit first' ended the 'no first strike' principle of America's peaceful decades of deterrence. But as Professor Alan Dershowitz has pointed out, 'pre-emption' has been claimed as the *casus belli* by practically every dictator in history, including Hitler; has never been codified in international law, and worse, has never been related to any fundamental American ideology.

## Middle East Peace

### Foreign Policy # 2: Middle East Peace

Q: *Why do Islamic terrorists threaten the lives of American citizens?*

A: *Because of the war between Israel and Palestine.*

Q: *How can we stop that war?*

A: *By occupying Iraq.*

Q: *How does that help?*

A: *It will send two good messages.*

Q: *To whom?*

A: *To the Israelis and Palestinians.*

Q: *What messages?*

A: *To Israel, 'America is now on your right shoulder, so you don't need to be so paranoid about peace with your Arab neighbours'.*

Q: *And to the Arab nations?*

A: *It will encourage them to consider the fate of those who continue to be state sponsors of terrorism.*

### Result:

Instead of bringing peace, critics claim, America sparked a new war in Lebanon and a civil war in Palestine.

As Winston Churchill said:

*'However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results...'*

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## The Reverse Domino

### Foreign Policy # 3: The Reverse Domino

*Q: Why do Islamic terrorists threaten American citizens?*

*A: The threat comes from the oppressed.*

*Q: So supporting oppression doesn't work?*

*A: No. The oppressed rise up.*

*Q: So what is the opposite of oppression?*

*A: Democracy.*

*Q: Therefore we need more democracy?*

*A: Yes. A democratic domino.*

*Q: What is that?*

*A: The reverse of the Vietnam domino.*

*Q: What do you mean?*

*A: Didn't we say that if Vietnam fell, country after country would fall to Communism? That was the Vietnam domino.*

*Q: So what is the reverse domino?*

*A: It works like this: If Iraq becomes a democracy, country after country will rise up to democracy.*

*Q: So if we start democracy somewhere in the Middle East it will roll out from there?*

*A: Correct.*

*Q. Why Iraq?*

*A: The military call it 'do-ability'. Which country is 'do-able' to start the domino? Iran is too strong. Palestine too complicated. Iraq is weak.*

**Result:**

Unfortunately, this had a hollow ring. It raised more questions than it answered. For example, if Iraq was condemned to invasion for not being a democracy, why not Saudi Arabia? Why not China?

## America's Role in the World

Critics say America's policy is at best inconsistent and at worst highly interventionist and destructive of regimes of which she disapproves.

*Hypocrisy.* According to Nobel Laureate Harold Pinter, 'The United States is the most dangerous power the world has ever known'. Under its policy to contain communism, the United States has sponsored dictatorships and tolerated the subversion of democracy, says the Rockefeller Director Julia Sweig: it is guilty of 'monstrous imperialism'. Yet it still has the nerve to disguise its conquests as 'humanitarian interventions', and to 'rebaptise' its wars as 'peace-keeping operations'. Sweig shows how America organised the fall of Latin American dictators; how it supported Greek, Spanish, and Portuguese dictatorships in Europe; how it has been unfaithful to the messianic mandate it claims for itself 'after God himself supposedly granted it'.

That is what Sayyid Qutb, Osama bin Laden's favourite philosopher, meant when he said pragmatism would spell the death of American civilization. He thought it would, in Professor Berman's phrase 'undermine America's ability to fend off its enemies'.

Bitter memories persist of another 9/11, the 11 September 1973 when the Government of Salvador Allende, the democratically elected President of Chile, was replaced by a military dictatorship backed by the US. This was an era, it is claimed, when American Cold War diplomacy made friends with all the tyrants on the planet so long as they sided with America in its power struggle with the Soviet Union. To some eyes, America's support for Saudi Arabia's feudal monarchy today is of a similar order. A good current example comes from the creators of the hit US TV show *The Wire*, 'We ooze hypocrisy from every pore. The end of the American empire, that's the text'.

*Unilateralism.* There is a tension too between what appears to be the US's world leadership ambitions and the views of other countries. The European desire to exercise power through multinational co-operation stands in contrast to the US administration's view that international law and the United Nations are often unreliable; and that the defence and promotion of a democratic order still depend on military force.

According to the UN Charter, a state can use force only in self-defence after it has suffered an armed attack. But American foreign

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policy practitioners say that post 9/11 the concepts of 'pre-emption', 'imminent attack', 'legitimacy' and the use of force all have to be re-examined. Critics say this has eroded the concept of state sovereignty. They say America has created confusion over the sources of authority in the international system.

Critics also denounce the attacks on democratic rights brought about by the struggle against terrorism. For example, Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz, asks us to consider, while we condemn cases of 'extraordinary rendition', the case of the terrorist who has just hidden a 'ticking bomb' that will explode within an hour. Is it legitimate, he asks, for the state to use force to extract the details of where the bomb is hidden?

Average turnout of less than 50 per cent and the alleged corruption of voting procedure at Presidential elections, make critics question if America is, in fact, a democracy at all.

*Too Religious.* Besides there is too much religion for the critics. When President Bush was asked by Bob Woodward whether he had consulted his father, George Bush Senior (given his experience of the Gulf War) about the invasion of Iraq, he replied 'I consulted a higher father'.

Secular critics object to America's claim of a direct line to the Almighty. They have heard 'God Bless America' once too often. They note that American Presidents swear their oaths of office on the Bible and end their inaugural speeches with the phrase, 'So help me God'.

All in all, America's foreign policy responses have not appeared to be based on a coherent, consistent set of beliefs. Embroiled in three wars, and after many lives lost, America is still unable to express simply, in a few words, its war aim. America speaks of 'democracy' and 'freedom'. But 'democracy' is sadly too abstract a concept for a world in which an American nurse on \$30,000 a year is in the top 8 per cent of the richest people on earth. And as Isaiah Berlin noted about 'freedom': 'Freedom for wolves is death to the lambs'.

### III

#### A Way Forward

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*Look to the rock from which you were hewn.*  
Isaiah 51.1

The accusations against America are endless. Perhaps they are all untrue. Just as Josef K protested his innocence on the basis that he was a victim of false perceptions, so perhaps might America do the same?

After all, isn't the reality that the United States was the founding impulse behind so much of our world? The examples shape so many areas of life: the cornerstones of the international community, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations which owe much to the US; today's medical achievements, many of which would not have been possible without the help of the USA; much of the human aid and third world relief too. And isn't the attraction of America – its culture, movies, food, clothing and technologies continuing to act as a magnet for millions of people the world over to visit and live? Besides America is home to some of the world's greatest museums and orchestras, leading colleges and universities and state of the art hospitals and medical research. The rest of the world continues to send its elite, its researchers, its future executives, to be trained in American universities, scientific institutions and companies. 70 per cent of all Nobel Prize winners are American.

All this may be real, but unfortunately for America, all of us know the power of perception over reality.

This is why David Kilcullen, seated at his desk in the Counter Insurgency Section on the 2nd floor of the State Department Building in Washington, was right to say: 'Perception truly now is reality ... and our enemies know it'. Kilcullen noted that when insurgents ambush an American convoy in Iraq they were doing so not 'because they want to reduce the number of Humvees we have in Iraq by one ... [but] because they want spectacular media footage of a burning Humvee'. These 'armed propaganda organisations' understand political momentum (like the IRA which went before). They know

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how to generate the perception of an unstoppable growing insurgency.

One consequence of the idea of a 'war on terror' has been the US focusing overwhelmingly on military responses. Yet in a counter-insurgency, according to the classical doctrine, which was first laid out by the British general Sir Gerald Templar during the Malayan emergency, armed force is only a quarter of the effort; political, economic, and information operations are also required.

The jury of world opinion is no different to the jury in a court of law – it seeks motive and intent. It wants to hear America's true motive – and it wants it to be 'good' in the moral sense. Policy-makers in the US administration may have good motives. Currently, they may see what they call, 'a new kind of imperial mission for America'. They may see for example how to bring an end to despotism in the Muslim world. They may see how the Iraqis might become a parliamentary democracy. They may see how 'Sunni' and 'Shia' could one day be just like 'Republican' and 'Democrat'. They may see that democracy could bring forth unpalatable electoral outcomes – extremist Islamist governments like Hamas - and accept that, because they are so sincere in their belief in 'One man! One vote!'

But whatever the American motive, the one certainty is that in recent times America has proved unequal to the task of expressing it. At a time of war, the importance of this omission cannot be exaggerated. Napoleon knew the difference between victory and defeat in war. He said it was 'Three parts moral. One part physical'. All generals agree. You can only win a war if your troops believe they are fighting for 'a noble object' and they say the first principle of warfare is 'the selection and retention of aim'.

Above all what is needed is to convince the world of America's nobility of purpose. Generals draw a distinction between 'the aim' and 'the objective'. The aim is not the seizing of an airport, or the taking of a bridge. They are 'objectives'. The aim is 'the mastery of the inside of men's minds'.<sup>5</sup> When, as the Democrat candidate for President, John F. Kennedy was asked how he intended to overcome

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<sup>5</sup>. John F. Kennedy's Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speech, 15th July 1960.

the Communist threat, he replied that what was required 'more than airpower, or financial power, or even manpower, was brain power'. So all the world could see, he said 'the splendour of our ideals'.

Ronald Reagan emphasised the point in his speech to the British House of Commons on June 8th, 1982 when he described 'the ultimate determinant in the struggle that's now going on in the world [as]not bombs and rockets ...but the strength of the values we hold, the beliefs we cherish, the ideals to which we are dedicated'. The President urged America never to allow itself 'to be placed in a position of moral inferiority'.

\* \* \* \*

So what today is the basis of America's claim to moral superiority? What is America's true motive?

The answer, as often happens, is in America's own hands. Or more precisely in the hands of the Statue of Liberty herself. She holds in her hand a tablet of bronze, inscribed with the date of perhaps the most iconic document in Western civilization – July 4th, 1776, the day the American Declaration of Independence was adopted.

As they remember their own childhood roots on this Independence Day, Americans will ask themselves some basic questions. What made America the world's great superpower? It is not its land mass. China is bigger. It is not its population. Europe has more. It is not its mineral wealth. Russia has more. What is it? What caused America's pre-eminence in the first place?

America was born out of desire for self-determination, a longing for the human dignity that only independence can bring. That is what the Pilgrim Fathers hoped when, inspired by the Scriptures, they announced their aim to create a 'A City upon a Hill.' This was to be their new Jerusalem – free from the stifling class-bound morality and corruption of 'Old Europe'. Americans of all national origins, religions, creeds, and colours would hold in common the ideals of the essential equality of all human beings, of inalienable rights to freedom, justice, and opportunity. America would embrace meritocracy before hierarchy. Its frontier spirit would mean anyone

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could do well if they were determined. In America nothing would be impossible. Americans would 'breathe free' – with freedom of speech and thought for all men and all women. These were the motives that made America the inspiration for so many millions of people – not its wealth, but its intense belief in its moral purpose.

When Karl Marx – of all people – praised 'the New America' as a 'classless society', he explained it offered the 'greatest possible development of the worker's aptitudes'. Marx described well the American ideal of self-realisation: the development of human potential in many different facets and directions for each person, so that a man could be 'a hunter in the morning, a fisherman in the afternoon, a cattle rearer in the evening, and a critic after dinner'. Thomas Jefferson (like other champions of liberal democracy) placed immense stress on independence, inner-directedness, self-determination. Autonomy, he said, was the basis of all morality. He wanted a free man to be able to say, 'I am the captain of my soul'. America should understand, more perhaps than any other society on earth 'The liberating allegiance to an Idea'.

This is why it is such an error to think of Americanism as merely a belief in 'practicality' and 'efficiency'. True Americanism is practical idealism. Its aims, instead of being merely materialistic and mechanical, are idealistic to the point of being Utopian. This is what struck James Bryce when he wrote in *The American Commonwealth* of 'the amazing solvent power which American institutions, habits, and ideas exercise upon newcomers of all races ... quickly dissolving and assimilating the foreign bodies that are poured into her mass'.

In the era of globalization, the 'mass' today is the whole planet. Before globalization it was possible – at least in theory – to be an 'isolationist'. It was possible to say about other nations, as the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain said about Czechoslovakia in 1938, that it was a far-away country of which we know little. But times change. Now there are no 'far-away' countries. Now everyone knows everything. The global financial market, satellite TV, mobile phones, camera phones, texts, e-mails, e-communities, the internet's citizen journalist and filmmaker etc, give us a clear, stark and often alarming view of a multi-ethnic planet in which many people, feeling

threatened and craving identity, define themselves by ethnic or religious loyalties.

\* \* \* \*

And here lies America's great opportunity. Americans once brilliantly transcended the inherent fragility and insecurity of their own multiethnic society. Now they have to do it again – for the whole world. Only America can do this. *E pluribus unum*: one out of many. In George Washington's own words, 'the bosom of America is open...to the oppressed and persecuted of all nations and religions'. By the 1850s, the immigrants for whom the Statue of Liberty was the first glimpse of America, made up half the population of New York and outnumbered native-born Americans in Chicago. They produced a new American culture out of what Woodrow Wilson called 'the great melting-pot of America'.

It is to the new great melting-pot of the world that America can bring – if only it can find the way to express it – its unique message of social justice, hope and optimism. This is the challenge for America's 21st century. In this way, America has the capacity to provide and express ideals which strike a chord in human beings everywhere – a declaration of independence on behalf of all the peoples of the world.

To disarm its enemies and defeat its rivals, America has only to focus its intellectual energy and its vast economic resources on the policies which would help the world follow its lead; to find the language to project its founding ideology beyond its own shores; and to remind the world of its ultimate belief – in self-determination, individuality, independence – and in democracy only as a means to that great end. To do that will require a certain idealism, a nobility of purpose, a marching tune people can respond to. So that Americans can once again, as the Pilgrim Fathers intended, show the world *The American Way*.

The outcome of the battle of ideas between Americanism and anti-Americanism will set the tone of the 21st century. It will be the decisive ideological struggle of our times. America has a fine ideology. But it has either forgotten what it is, or forgotten how to express it.

America today is a sleeping beauty. It is time to wake her up.

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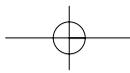
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