because of their vertical integration, and he opposed both on principle, whether or not they delivered goods to the consumer more efficiently and therefore more cheaply. To him, `quantity discounts' were `fraught with very great evil,' even if accompanied by cost—savings to the supplier, and therefore ultimately with cost—savings to the general public.

A well—paid Supreme Court judge would not, naturally, take the same view of the importance of marginally lower food prices as a working—class housewife operating within a strict budget. And America was about the multitude, not about the elites. That, at any rate, was the assumption of its Constitution. Distinctions between classes were particularly marked in transport, and always had been. Throughout history, the multitude had always had their movement restrained by lack of personal transport. The problem rose in an acute form in the United States because of its sheer scale and what has been called the `tyranny of distance.' Gentlemen and farmers owned horses, but farmhorses were seldom available for non—essential work. The carriage was always a luxury; hence the distinction between `carriage folk' and the rest. Thanks to huge concentrations of capital, by 1900 the railroads had made short—distance travel cheap and universal and brought even longdistance journeys within the means of most. But it was not personal, in the way the carriage—and—four was, or a private railroad coach (very common around 1900) or a steam yacht.

Then came the internal—combustion engine. Granted the size of the oil industry in the United States by 1890, and the successful efforts of Standard Oil to bring down prices, not least of petroleum and gasoline, it is odd that a gigantic country like the United States should have been so slow to develop an automobile industry. Up to 1895 France and Germany were the pioneers. Even in 1899 the American auto industry was ranked 150 in terms of the value of the product, and unranked in terms of wages, workers, costs, and value—added. Edison, always at the forefront of the future trend, shouted in vain that the auto was `the coming wonder ... it is only a matter of time before the cars and trucks of every major city will be run by motors' (1895).

Then, within a decade, the world—picture was dramatically changed, very largely as a result of the efforts of one man, Henry Ford (1863—1947). He was born on a farm near Dearborn in Michigan and knew from experience the isolation which lack of personal transport imposed on millions of American farming families. In the years 1879—86 he acquired wonderful skills as a machinist in Detroit, already a center of advanced engineering, and he then had a spell in the Edison Company under the master inventor—entrepreneur himself. He built his first gasoline engine in 1892 and a decade later organized the Ford Motor Company. He illustrated the power, which all historians learn to recognize, of a good but simple idea pursued singlemindedly by a man of implacable will. Ford thought the internal—combustion engine, combined with cheap gas (already available), was the solution to the problem of rural isolation and indeed of suburban and city transport too. The task he set himself was to design and manufacture an automobile which was easy to drive, safe, totally reliable (unlike virtually all the early models), made of the strongest and best materials, and whose price could be progressively reduced by economies of scale. The result was the Model T of 1908. Farmers (and their wives and daughters) found they could handle it and even learn to `fix' it on the rare occasions when it needed attention. Standard Oil, now in hot competition with Texas, Gulf, and the foreign—owned Shell, supplied the cheap gas.

Ford marketed the first Model T at $850 in 1908, when he sold 5,986. By 1916, when he sold 577,036, he had got the price down to $360. By 1927, when the series was discontinued, he had sold over 15 million of these autos, and made them and their rivals standard equipment for the American family. Ford gave the entire, vast nation a mobility it had never possessed before—and

which in time spread throughout the world. Ford grasped that Big Business, with its economies of scale, could lead to even bigger business provided it shared its profits with its workforce by paying handsome wages. In 1914, when industrial workers were averaging about $11 a week, he abruptly decided to pay his men $5 for an eight—hour day, so that they could all buy his Model Ts. The idea was obvious but new, and valid. By 1920 Ford, having bought out all his partners, had contrived to do three things: first, to deliver to the mass consumer a quality product at the lowest possible price; second, to pay the highest wages in the industry and, at that date, in history; and, third, to become (after John D. Rockefeller) the nation's second billionaire—indeed, at the height of his success, he was the richest man on earth.— This last made him highly objectionable to many people but he was not easy to prosecute as a monopolist because in 1908, the year of his Model T's birth, General Motors was formed with the quite opposite strategy of offering cars for every taste and pocket. William Durant put together Buick and two other companies, then added Oldsmobile and Cadillac, and finally Chevrolet. By 1920—1 GM was selling 193,275 vehicles a year, against Ford's 845,000. That gave Ford 55.67 percent of the market but with enormous competition (the 253 car—manufacturers of 1908 had narrowed down to 44 by 1929) there was never any possibility of monopoly. But Ford and GM were big—by the 1930s GM was the world's largest industrial company—and that alone made them the focus of the regulators and the investigators.

The anti—bigness emotion, so characteristic of the decades between the Civil War and World War One—and becoming stronger with each—is worth looking at because it was unAmerican. It is necessary to distinguish between Populists, who aimed deliberately at the farming vote and agricultural prejudices, and Progressives, who tended to be highly educated intellectuals aiming at an urban audience. Historians have seen the Populist Era as embracing the years 1880—1900 and the Progressive Era 1900 up to America's entry into World War One. But they overlapped and intermingled throughout. It has been argued that Progressivism was the hostile reaction of the educated middle class to the overwhelming power of Big Business, whose wealth and scale and lure elbowed them out of the political—economic picture entirely, or so they feared. Since the days of the Founding Fathers, the educated elite had guided, if they had not exactly run, the United States, and they felt their influence was being eroded by the sheer quantity of money now sloshing around in the bowels of America's great ship of state. Some of the anti—business reformers, like `Gold Rule' Jones, Charles Evans Hughes, and Tom Johnson, were self—made men. Others had gilded names like du Pont, Morgenthau, Pinchot, Perkins, Dodge, McCormick, Spreckels, and Patterson. These earnest scions of wealthy families led some critics to call Progressivism a `millionaires' reform movement.' But careful prosophological analysis shows that the great majority were solidly middle class, university graduates of old British stock. The 1880s and 1890s had been conservative decades with both Republican and Democratic leaderships reflecting the prevailing mood. By 1900, however, a number of new political fashions had come together to constitute a broad—based educated left—gas—and—water (or municipal) socialism, which was worldwide, trust—busting, conservationism (anti—urban sprawl, pro—wilderness), health fanaticism, the notion of educated purposeful elites as `guardians' of the people, which was shared by a wide range of elitists, from Walter Lippmann (1889—1974) to Vladimir Ilyich Lenin and Benito Mussolini, and literary and artistic bohemianism.

This was a heady mixture, capable of emitting fumes of both good and evil. And in the background—sometimes in the foreground—were other forces: conspiracy theory and racism.

The notion that various sinister gangs of people were plotting to destroy the `good America' was an old English tradition the Pilgrim Fathers had brought with them and had first made history during the agitation against the Stamp Act. It had been brilliantly exploited by Andrew Jackson in his war against the Bank of the United States. Now it became the folklore of both Populism and the Progressives. Ignatius Donnelly made good use of it. It was brandished especially by women writers, such as Mrs S. E. V. Emery, whose book *Seven Financial Conspiracies Which Have Enslaved the American People* was published in 1887 and sold hugely in states like Kansas. Another female rabble—rouser was Mary E. Lease, author of *The Problem of Civilization Solved* (1895), who coined the `farmers' slogan' of `raise less corn and more hell.' Much of this output was anti—semitic (and, by association, Anglophobic, Wall Street being presented as controlled by a Jewish City of London). William Hope Harvey published the most popular of all these insidious books, *Coin's Financial School*, in 1893, following it with a conspiracy novel, *A Tale of Two Nations* (1894), in which Rothschild and Bryan figure, a little disguised. The villains of such novels were all Jews and *Coin's* was illustrated by a drawing of the world in the grip of an octopus, labeled Rothschild, stretching out from London. Not surprisingly, the farmers' campaign for silver, as opposed to gold, linked `Wall Street and the Jews of Europe,' and an Associated Press reporter who followed the Populist convention at St Louis in 1896 complained publicly of the ubiquitous anti—semitism there.

There was a point at which Populism, in the broader sense, embraced nationalism, xenophobia, nativism, white racism, and imperialism. Mary Lease's formula for rescuing civilization, for instance, involved a global separation of the races, with white supremacists ruling all. In the second half of the 19th century most members of white races felt, and said more or less openly, that they had a divine mission, or at least a cultural duty, to rule over what Kipling called the `lesser breeds.' America was the first of the ex—colonial nations, but most Americans, by now, felt the itch too. It was the spirit of the age. Manifest Destiny had made America an acquisitive power. Under the presidency of Andrew Johnson, Secretary of State Seward bought Alaska from Russia at the knock—down price of $7,200,000. At the time, many Americans protested it was too much and called the new purchase (organized as a civil and judicial district in 1884) 'Seward's Icebox.' But the discovery of massive gold deposits in the Klondike, 1897—8, revealed the value of the acquisition and led rapidly to its elevation to constitutional status as a Territory in 1912.

Alaska was the first possession of the expanding United States which was not contiguous. But it was soon not the only one. Americans had been in the Pacific since the 1780s, as navigators, traders, whalers, fishermen, and, not least, missionaries, and from the 1820s US missions were established in Hawaii and other islands in strength. They had helped to promote literacy and liberal political institutions, as well as Christianity and American commerce, and when the local Hawaiian ruler, Queen Liliuokalani, took a sudden anti—progressive lurch in 1891, a local American, Sanford B. Dole, supported by the US minister, organized a `committee of public safety,' which called in nearby US marines and established a government with Dole as president (1893). Seven years later, with some misgivings—behind Dole were the sugar interests, as well as missionaries—Washington recognized Hawaii as a US territory, with Dole as governor. In return for overcoming its scruples, America got the naval base of Pearl Harbor.

The role played by American missionaries in the acquisition of Hawaii was typical of the way in which American Christianity was acquiring an imperialist persona. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (mainly Congregational) had been formed as long ago as 1810, the American Baptist Missionary Board following in 1814. But it was only after the end of

the Civil War, seen by many American Protestants not as a Christian defeat, in which the powerlessness or contradictions of the faith had been exposed, but as an American—Christian victory, in which Christian egalitarian teaching had been triumphantly vindicated against renegades and apostates, that the missionary surge gathered momentum. It fitted neatly into a world vision of the Anglo—Saxon races raising up the benighted and ignorant dark millions, and bringing them, thanks to a `favoring providence,' into the lighted circle of Christian truth. The universalist mission of Christ, which had raised up America to be a `City on the Hill,' would be triumphantly completed. This Christian mission was essentially, in American eyes, a Protestant one. In these years, when Darwin's *Origin of Species*, popularized by Herbert Spencer as `the survival of the fittest,' and applied to races as well as species in a vulgarized form, Social Darwinism, the coming Christian triumph was presented as an Anglo—Saxon Protestant one. The American Christian republic was a triumphant success. It was so, essentially, because it was Protestant—failure was evidence of moral unworthiness, of the kind associated with decadent Catholics in southern Europe and Latin America.

In the 1870s, the ultra—Protestant and strongly anti—Catholic preacher Henry Ward Beecher used to tell his congregation in New York: `Looking comprehensively through city and town and village and country, the general truth will stand, that no man in this land suffers from poverty unless it be more than his fault—unless it be his *sin* ... There is enough and to spare thrice over; and if men have not enough, it is owing to the want of provident care, and foresight, and industry and frugality and wise saving. This is the general truth." And a related general truth was that God's will was directly expressed in the destiny of a country where success—breeding virtue was predominant. This was Protestant triumphalism, and its dynamic was American triumphalism. George Bancroft, in his *History of the United States*, began (1876 edition): `It is the object of the present work to explain the steps by which a favoring providence, calling our institutions into being, has conducted the country to its present happiness and glory.' Sooner or later the entire world would follow suit. It was urged to do so in 1843 by the American missionary Robert Baird, in his *Religion in America*, in which he projected the principle of Protestant Voluntarism onto a global frame. History and interventionist theology were blended to produce a new kind of patriotic millenarianism. Leonard Woolsey Bacon wrote in his *History of American Christianity* (1897): 'By a prodigy of divine providence, the secret of the ages [that a new world lay beyond the sea] had been kept from premature disclosure ... If the discovery of America had been achieved ... even a single century earlier, the Christianity to be transplanted to the western world would have been that of the Church of Europe at its lowest stage of decadence.' Hence he saw `great providential preparation, as for some "divine event," still hidden behind the curtain that is about to rise on the new century.'

The `divine event' was the Christianization of the world in accordance with American standards of justice and probity. That was to be a racial and national as well as a religious event. In 1885 Josiah Strong, general secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, published a book, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and its Present Crisis*, in which he argued:

> It seems to me that God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is here training the Anglo—Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the world's future ... *the final competition of races, for which the Anglo—Saxon is being schooled* ... this race of unequaled energy, with all the majesty of numbers and might of wealth behind it—the representative, let us hope, of the largest liberty, the purest Christianity, the highest civilization—having developed peculiarly aggressive traits calculated to impress its institutions on mankind, will spread

> itself over the earth. And can anyone doubt that the result of this competition between the races will be the survival of the fittest?

Such theories were not uncommon at the time. What was significant in the United States was that they radiated from a Christian context and were presented as part of an altruistic scheme to Christianize the world. By this stage America was the leading missionary force, in terms of the resources it deployed, especially in Asia and the Pacific, and it was thought that the white races in general, and the Anglo—Saxons in particular, would succeed in bringing to reality Christ's vision of nearly two millennia before—a universal faith. The 19th century had been a period of such astonishing, and on the whole benign, progress that even this great dream now seemed possible. In the 1880s the young American Methodist John Raleigh Mott had coined the phrase `The evangelizing of the world in one generation.' That was a task for American leadership.

It was against this background that America drifted, or blunderedor perhaps strode—into its one imperialist adventure, the Spanish—American War, 1898. That Cuba had not been annexed by America long since was itself surprising. As we have seen, some Southerners had wanted it. Others had not. Cuba was the last of Spain's colonies in the Americas, and it was said to be oppressed. In 1868—78, there had been a rising there, followed by a guerrilla war, and America had been begged to intervene by Cuban `patriots.' But America had not stirred. During the 1880s and early 1890s, however, American investments in Cuba multiplied many times, and when the Cubans again rebelled in 1895 American sympathies, not unaffected by the imperialist spirit of the age, were aroused. There was also the Christian dimension. Catholic Spain, not only in Cuba but more importantly in the Philippines, was adamant in excluding Protestant missionaries, believing them keen to spread democracy as well as heresy. The Populists and the rank—and—file Democrats got very excited over the prospects of Cuban independence. They identified with the oppressed Cuban rebels and threatened to campaign under the slogan `Free silver and Free Cuba.' The Republicans feared to be outbid in playing the nationalist card, hitherto one of their strong suits.

The United States was involved in the Cuban insurrection from the start because it was the source of various filibustering expeditions, and a Cuban `National Junta' in New York sold bonds and made noisy propaganda. The financial world, however, urged caution and neutrality, and so long as President Cleveland was in the White House this was official US policy. In the autumn of 1896, however, McKinley was elected on a platform which included a demand for Cuban independence, adopted by the Republicans to prevent the Democrats offering more. McKinley nonetheless tried to act circumspectly, encouraging the Spanish to introduce reforms which would appease both Cuban and American opinion. But an outspoken private letter from the Spanish minister in Washington, Enrique de Lome, accusing McKinley of being `weak, and a bidder for the admiration of the crowd,' was stolen and gleefully published (February 9, 1898) in the jingo *New York journal*, owned by William Randolph Hearst (1863—1951). A week later, the US battleship *Maine*, which had been sent to Havana to protect American citizens, was blown up, with the loss of 260 of her crew, by an underwater mine. Who planted the mine has never been discovered with certainty, but the Hearst press, and the *New York World*, owned by Joseph Pulitzer (1847—1911), blamed Spain. Congress voted $50 million for national defense without a dissenting vote and on April 11: McKinley sent Congress a message demanding `forceful intervention' in Cuba to establish peace on the island. On the 20th Congress passed a War Resolution and McKinley signed it, though an amendment was added disclaiming any desire to exercise sovereignty over Cuba. Diplomatic ties were broken and a blockade imposed, and on April 24—25 both sides declared war.

Whether this `Splendid Little War,' as it was called, was created by Hearst, or by US business interests, or was an accident, or inevitable, is still argued about by historians. The evidence suggests only a few businessmen directly involved wanted war; the rest were for peace or, if peace was unobtainable, what would be now be called a quick `surgical strike' to restore order. That is what they got. The war was primarily naval. The United States had an army of only 30,000 but its `steel navy' was modern. The Spanish Pacific squadron was defeated in the Battle of Manila Bay (May 1). The US Fifth Corps landed near the Spanish naval base of Santiago and, after the heights of San Juan Hill were stormed by Theodore Roosevelt's `Rough Riders,' and the shore batteries, commanding the harbor, passed under American control, the Spanish admiral had no alternative but to surrender or take his ships to sea. He chose battle, and all of them were destroyed (July 3), American casualties being one killed and one wounded. The swift manner in which US naval technology demolished old Spain, once the world's strongest power, was comparable to the annihilation by Britain, at the Battle of Omdurman two months later, of the vast but barbarous army of the Sudanese Mahdi. At a stroke, the United States emerged as a great power, and a global one, with all kinds of new responsibilities, including administration of the 7,100 islands which constitute the Philippines.

At the Treaty of Paris, signed on December 10, Spain ceded to the United States Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines (getting $20 million in return) and gave Cuba its independence. The Senate ratified the treaty by a close vote, many of its members not relishing the idea of the Great Republic acquiring an overseas empire. It was characteristic of the age that McKinley himself placed the retention of the Philippines as a colony firmly in a Christian evangelical context: `I am not ashamed to tell you, Gentlemen, that I went down on my knees and prayed Almighty God for light and guidance that one night. And one night later it came to me this way ... There was nothing left for us to do but to take them all and to educate the Filippinos and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow men for whom Christ also died.' Thus the United States acquired 7 million subjects, 85 percent of whom, as it happened, were already Christians, albeit lowly Roman Catholics.

With a victorious war under his belt, and a strong economy, McKinley was easily renominated in 1900 and did not trouble himself to campaign actively. Bryan was again his opponent and a very vigorous one, delivering over 600 speeches in twenty—four states, perhaps the most extensive campaign yet carried out by a presidential candidate. But his anti—imperialism was unfashionable and his silver policy dated. He lost by a wider margin than in 1896, McKinley beating him in the popular vote by 7,219,530 to 6,358,071, and carrying the college 292—155. The important change was in McKinley's running mate. Roosevelt, who had been Assistant Navy Secretary in the Cuban War, and led the Rough Riders, succeeded the old VicePresident, Garret A. Hobart, who died in office. His promotion became of critical importance on September 6, 1901, when McKinley, opening the Pan—American Exposition in Cleveland, was shot by a local anarchist, Leon Czolgosz, and died eight days later. At forty—two, Roosevelt became the youngest president in the history of the republic, and the first since Lincoln to combine a coherent body of political, philosophical, and social doctrine with an outstanding personality. At last the great and now overwhelmingly mighty republic got a president of comparable stature. Emerson had written: `Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? ... America is a poem in our eyes.' 'TR' was not exactly a poem, though he could be poetic; prose was more his style. But he was undoubtedly a phenomenon.

The entrance of the Roosevelts on to the center—stage merits a word. America has no kings but it rejoices in its family dynasties, religious, political, and commercial. In the 17th and the 18th centuries, as we have seen, there were the Winthrops and the Mathers. In the 19th century there were the Adamses and the Astors, the Vanderbilts, Morgans, and Rockefellers, and in the 20th century we have had the Roosevelts and the Kennedys. For variety and richness of character—and sheer talent—these clans are well up to the standard of the great English houses, the Russells, Churchills, Cecils, and Cavendishes. It is strange that Henry James, who loved such human continuities so dearly, should have turned his back on the family treasures of his own country to go whoring after anemic Mayfair—and still stranger that Edith Wharton, who knew more about American high society than James did, especially in Manhattan, should have preferred the *menus plaisirs* of the Paris gratin to the richer meat of Long Island and Newport. But so it is: the greatest writers often feel themselves exiles in their own country and prefer Abroad.

The Roosevelts were descended from the old Dutch patroons. They had a common trunk but there were two branches, called after their estates. The Oyster Bay branch produced Theodore Roosevelt, President 1901—9, and the Hyde Park branch Franklin Delano Roosevelt, President 1933—45, so that in the first fifty years of the 20th century Roosevelts occupied the White House for nearly twenty of them. The two branches were highly competitive and jealous of each other. They occasionally intermarried—FDR's wife Eleanor was from the Oyster Bay branch and TR's nephew married FDR's niece—though generally relationships were malicious, even hostile. But the presidential Roosevelts were gifted populists in politics and had much in common, including enormous energy, especially under physical affliction, and a zest for life. TR was a radical conservative whereas FDR was a conservative radical. A preference for one over the other is a touchstone of American character. Most American intellectuals would rate FDR the greatest president since Lincoln. But a substantial minority prefer TR, seeing him as the archetypal American `good guy,' combining the best of the inherited English tradition of gentlemanly honor with a riproaring taste for adventure which is quintessentially American—by comparison judging FDR sly, feline, secretive, and *faux bonbomme*.

TR was the first great American to be dogged by photographers all his life, the results often producing ribald smiles among modern commentators. Aged six, he is seen peering out of a New York brownstone as Lincoln's coffin processed through Manhattan on the way to its last resting place in Illinois. Then he is seen posing against a studio background before heading for Dakota, wearing funny lace—up soft—leather boots, fringed leather jerkin, broad belt, fancy dagger, and a bearskin hat and carrying a carbine in menacing fashion. He posed in the same absurd hat for a reenactment of his capture of Redhead Finnigan, the outlawed horse—thief—the photo was partly fake as one of the `outlaws' was in fact a member of TR's team. There are further photos of him dressed for war in large leather gloves, side—turned hat, pince—nez and mustaches, or in shirt—and—suspenders, jackboots, huge pistol—holster, and scout—hat, posing with his Rough Riders in Cuba. One has to look through these comic theatricals to the steady, serious, true heart and powerful brain beneath.

TR was a sickly child, an anxious youth and young man, and when his young wife died leaving him a twenty—five—year—old widower with a child, he went out to the Badlands of Dakota, to heal and find himself (1884). Calling it the Badlands was a typical 19th—century topographical moral judgment (though it is true that the French, who were there first, baptized them *mauvaise terres a traverser*). It was indeed a Deathscape, actually strewn with buffalo skulls and bones. Below the buttes were mazes of quicksands and connecting gullies and

abysses, into which men and animals simply disappeared. There were mists of steam, and smoldering lignite and coal seams emitted subterranean fires. TR, characteristically, summed up: `The Badlands looked like Poe sounded.' He noted that volcanic ash covered this part of South Dakota, east of the Black Hills in the southwest of the Territory (it did not become a state till 1889). The ash went to a depth of 300 feet and had in prehistoric times engulfed herds of mammoths, elephants, camels, and other creatures whose bones are still buried there. Natural forces were still scorching, eroding, sandblasting, and freezing, then rock—splitting the surface all the time and TR called it `As grim and desolate and forbidding as any place on earth could be.' He seems to have seen himself, not quite consciously, as like John the Baptist in the desert, or Jesus Christ spending a time in the wilderness to prepare himself for his ministry.

The Roosevelts were old money and TR was able to buy himself into a cattle—herding business, setting up his headquarters at the Maltese Cross Ranch near Medora, and building a remote lodge called Elkhorn. It was his object to overcome his physical debility by pushing himself to the limit of his resources: he wrote a letter home boasting, `I have just come in from spending *thirteen* hours in the saddle.' There were still a few buffalo and Sioux Indians around and the frontier was not yet `closed' in the Jackson Turner sense. There was, now and always, a touch of Hemingway literary—machismo about TR and a longing to play John Wayne roles. (TR, of course, lived before that precious pair and thought more of the scenarios displayed in Twain's *Roughing It*, which had just been published.) In a saloon in Mingusville (called after a couple, Minnie and Gus, who founded the town), he knocked down a drunken cowboy who was shooting off his guns and terrifying the ladies. TR struck the man in the face with both fists, the guns going off harmlessly. He remarked, `Well, if I've got to, I've got to.' He wrote home: `I wear a sombrero, silk neckerchief, fringed buckskin shirt, sealskin *chaparajos* or riding trousers, alligator hide boots, and with my pearl—hilted revolvers and beautifully finished Winchester rifle, I shall be able to face anything.' His silver—mounted Bowie knife came from Tiffany's, as did his silver belt—buckle with a bear's head and his initialed silver spurs. He duly shot his grizzly—'The bullet hole in his skull was as exactly between his eyes as if I had measured the distance with a carpenter's rule.' He said to a local bully called Paddock, who threatened to hound him off his range: `I understand you have threatened to kill me on sight. I have come over to see when you want to begin the killing and to let you know that if you have anything to say against me, now is the time to say it.'

It was all very like a future Western, and ended with TR capturing Redhead Finnigan and two fellow—outlaws, for which he was paid a reward of $50. It was entertaining and sometimes tough and even risky but it was play—acting and at the end of two years TR went back east and promptly married, a second time, a girl called Edith, directly descended from Jonathan Edwards. After his return he summed up his philosophy in a Fourth of July oration:

> Like all Americans, I like big things: big prairies, big forests and mountains, big wheat fields, railroads—and herds of cattle too—big factories and steamboats and everything else. But we must keep steadily in mind that no people were ever yet benefited by riches if their prosperity corrupted their virtue. It is more important that we should show ourselves honest, brave, truthful, and intelligent than that we should own all the railways and grain elevators in the world. We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage a people ever received and each of us must do his part if we wish to show that this nation is worthy of its good fortune.

There can be no doubt that TR believed every word of these sentiments and did his best to live up to them. He was exactly the same kind of romantic—intellectual—man—of—action—writer—professional—politician as his younger contemporary, Winston Churchill. The two did not like each other, having so much in common, and being so competitive; and TR criticized Churchill severely because `he does not stand up when ladies come into the room' (such things mattered in those days). TR wanted to have many children, believing `good blood' should battle with immigrant strains—what he called `the warfare of the cradle.' He sought action because `every man must prove himself' and a politician should not send men into battle `without knowing what it is like.' In Cuba he served with the First Volunteer Cavalry under the official command of General Leonard Wood, the conqueror of Geronimo, but TR was the real mover of the unit. It was like a World War Two command, a mixture of Texas Rangers and working—class adventurers (some of whom later joined the Buffalo Bill show) and Harvardeducated young bloods, Hamilton Fishes, Tiffanys, Astors, and so on. The Cuba campaign was no outing, men dying by disease as well as falling in action. Some drowned in a storm on landing, and when the wounded fell on the beach they were attacked by big land—crabs which tore out their eyes and lips. TR enjoyed the campaign, saying, `I do not want to be called a Parlor Jingo,' and led repeated charges at San Juan Hill. All the same, there was vote—catching in the trip, and he returned a public hero: the invitation to be vice—president—and the presidency itself—followed.

However, the fact that TR was a big man is proved by the strength of his administration. It included Henry Stimson, Herbert Smith, William Moody, Robert Bacon, Franklin Lane, James Garfield, Charles Prouty, Gifford Pinchot, and other men of mark. Lord Bryce, the great British ambassador, who published one of the best and most comprehensive surveys of the American system,' said he had never come across such a high—minded and efficient group of public servants as the Roosevelt administration. They were indeed `the Best and the Brightest.' Roosevelt himself regretted only that they were ill—read in English literature and, in particular, had never heard of Lewis Carroll. When he quoted to his Navy Secretary, William Moody, `Mr Secretary *what I say three times is true*,' the aggrieved man replied: `Mr President, it would never for a moment have occurred to me to impugn your veracity.' So when Roosevelt entertained Edith Wharton to dinner, he greeted her: `Well, I *am* glad to welcome to the White House someone to whom I can quote "The Hunting of the Snark" without being misunderstood.'

Roosevelt went out of his way, in fact, to make his White House a place where writers and artists felt at home, despite his vandalizing of Tiffany's screen. He even had to dinner Henry James, who had called him `a dangerous and ominous jingo' and whom he privately dismissed as `effete' and a `miserable little snob.' Mrs Wharton at least reciprocated his admiration. She was present in September 1902 when the President's carriage was run down by a trolley car, during a speaking tour; he was hurled, battered and bleeding, onto the sidewalk. His face was badly bruised and one knee so damaged that surgeons almost amputated his leg. But he carried on his engagement and Mrs Wharton, who heard him speak, wrote: `I think if you could have seen the President here the other day, all bleeding and swollen from that hideous accident, and could have heard the very few quiet and fitting words he said to the crowd gathered to receive him, you would have agreed that he is not all—or nearly all—bronco—buster.'

As it happens, the theme of TR's discourse, repeated over and over again that year, was the wickedness of Big Business. He denounced J. P. Morgan and US Steel, he fulminated against Rockefeller and what he called `the Bad Trust'—Standard Oil—and he positively excoriated Harriman, whom he treated as a social and moral outcast. There was something petty in this kind of Populism, coming from a man whose family had inherited, and always lived off, wealth

accumulated in distant times by methods which would not bear close examination. It was as though TR, representing old and limited money, could not stomach the arrival of new money in unlimited quantities. The fact is, Roosevelt, though president for over seven years, did not have enough to do, or rather sufficient challenges for his powerful brain and boundless energies. There was no grand international crisis for him to grapple with, and the times were not yet ripe—they soon would be—for fundamental changes in the way America was governed.

TR was a firm believer in executive action, as opposed to Congressional legislation. He argued—like Jackson—that the President might do anything in the national interest not expressly forbidden by the Constitution, which, he said, `must be interpreted not as a straitjacket, not as laying the hand of death upon our development, but as an instrument designed for the life and healthy growth of the Nation.' His motto was `speak softly but carry a big stick'—the stick being executive power, a new form of royal prerogative. When the United Mine Workers brought the coal industry to a halt in the summer of 1902, and the mineowners prepared to starve the miners out, TR intervened. The owners' negotiator, George F. Baer, infuriated him by declaring, `The rights and interests of the laboring man will be protected and cared for not by the labor agitators, but by the Christian men to whom God in his infinite wisdom has given control of the property interests of the country,' and when the two met in the White House TR felt tempted to throw Baer through the window. He said he had the presidential power, and if need be would exercise it, to take over the mines and run them, using the army. This was the first time any president had contemplated an industrial takeover (though one can imagine Lincoln doing it) and the threat worked: the owners accepted mediation, by preference.

TR ran a broad—based regime which found a place for organized labor, a place for Big Business despite his trust—busting (he solicited and received business campaign contributions), a place for the farmers, and a place for blacks. He invited Booker T. Washington (1856—1915), the negro educationist and author of a superb autobiography *Up from Slavery* (1901), to a meal at the White House, for which—amazing as it seems to us now—he was bitterly criticized at the time. Some of the Republican Party bosses thought TR was too liberal and looked around for an alternative to run. But TR found no difficulty in getting himself renominated in 1904 and he walked over his Democratic opponent, judge Alton Parker (1852—1926), 7,628,461 to 5,084,223, winning the college 336 to 140, Parker carrying Southern states only.

TR had already had one shot at regulating the railroads in 1903 when he got Congress to pass the Elkins Act, outlawing rebates, and now, overwhelmingly elected in his own right, he used his authority to help push through the Hepburn Act (1906) which gave the Interstate Commerce Commission power to set maximum rates. In general, he worked in tandem with the more responsible of the muckrakers to improve conditions in meat—packing, food—processing, drug—manufacturing, and other good causes of the time. He established the Department of Commerce and Labor, with its oversight Bureau of Corporations. As a portent of times to come, he paid special attention to conservation. Gifford Pinchot, whom he made head of the Forestry Division in the Department of Agriculture, was instrumental in securing 172 million acres of treeland for the nation and in instituting a series of national programs to preserve and build up the United States holdings in natural resources. A Public Lands Commission, an Inland Waterways Commission, and a National Conservation Commission were created, and Pinchot struck a fine balance between preserving the wilderness and making needful use of water, land, and timber for the country's rapidly increasing population. During the Roosevelt presidency men and women felt that the White House was inhabited by an intelligent, many—faceted, far—sighted, civilized—though not unduly sensitive—spirit.

TR’s most notable achievement, in some ways, was to push through the Panama Canal. That meant softening up with cash the corrupt and venal government of Colombia, which owned the Panama Isthmus. Under the Hay—Herran Treaty of 1903, America was to build the canal and pay Colombia $10 million down and an annual rental of $250,000. The Colombian government, to the fury of TR, upped its demand to $25 million. Unwilling to be hornswoggled by what he called ‘a bunch of dagoes’ and ‘the foolish and homicidal corruptionists of Bogota,’ TR connived at a local conspiracy to set up a separate state of Panama, recognized by his government in November 1903. A new treaty was put through immediately with the Panamanian government, on the same financial terms, but which extended the width of the Canal Zone from 6 to 10 miles and gave the United States `in perpetuity, the use, occupation and control’ of it. When TR asked his AttorneyGeneral, Philander C. Knox, to get an expert legal opinion to uphold the constitutionality of his actions as president, Knox replied: `No, Mr President, if I were you I would not have any taint of legality about it.’ As TR is said to have remarked (the story may be apocryphal): `What’s the Constitution between friends?’

It was Roosevelt’s view that America had a right, not exactly Godgiven but arising naturally out of the circumstances of the hemisphere and the United States’ proponderant power within it, to operate as a hemispheric policeman. Just as, in America itself, the federal government had what he called a `national policing power,’ so in American waters the American navy, now the second largest in the world after Britain’s, had a duty to uphold democratic republicanism and good government in the interests of all. As a corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, he argued that, since European interference in the hemisphere was unacceptable, and since foreign powers whose nationals had invested heavily in Latin American states might be tempted to subvert them if corrupt governments reneged on debts or permitted plundering, the United States had a prior right and duty to forestall such crisis by acting itself. Hence he made what became known as the Roosevelt Corollary part of his 1904 annual address to Congress: `Chronic wrongdoing ... may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power.’ This authority was exercised repeatedly, and on the whole sensibly and to general satisfaction, over the next few decades, especially in the Caribbean area.

Roosevelt had some of the ambivalence towards public life of George Washington (and indeed of Alexander Hamilton, the American hero he most admired). He wrote in his autobiography that his own generation and class shunned politics as vulgar: `The men I knew best were the men of the clubs of social pretension and the men of cultivated taste and easy life.’ They told him to avoid politics and `assured me that the men I met would be rough and brutal and unpleasant to deal with. I answered that if it were so it merely meant that the people I knew did not belong to the governing class, and that the other people did—and that I intended to be one of the governing class.’ But did he? TR enjoyed power and battle but he had many other interests. He liked travel and big—game hunting and international hob—nobbing with the great. He was the first president to leave the country, visiting Panama, but he found the White House restrictive in many ways. It may have been him who first coined the saying, `Winning the presidency is to condemn yourself to four years of drinking Californian wine’ (then in its rude infancy). He disliked many of the people whom his office forced him to consort with, notably businessmen. He thought them timid, unadventurous, what he called ‘flub—dubs’ and `mollycoddles,’ or just plain dishonest."‘ In

1908, only fifty and still young enough to enjoy himself, he indicated he would resign if he were allowed by the Republican Party to pick his successor. A deal was struck.

William Howard Taft (1857—1930) was an extraordinary choice for a man like TR to make and was proof of the contention that great men should not be allowed to pick their successors. He won the election on Roosevelt's record without difficulty, beating the Democrat no—hoper, Bryan, who was despairingly chosen a third time, by 7,679,006 to 6,409,106 and, in the college, by 321 to 162. As he was driving to the White House after his inaugural, he said to his wife Helen, who wore the pants in their family, `Now I'm in the White House nobody is going to push me around any more.' In fact nobody exactly pushed him around: he weighed over 300 pounds and was the largest man ever to be president. But it was Helen who led him around and it was entirely her idea that he should go into politics. He was by nature sedentary and judicial. He came from Cincinnati in the Republican heartland, had been solicitor—general in the 1890s, then a federal circuit judge and a much respected governor—general of the Philippines. TR made him secretary of war and he did as he was told. He reached the White House to please his wife but almost immediately after he got there she was stricken by a debilitating illness and was unable to run his affairs any more.

Almost despite himself, Taft contrived to infuriate his predecessor. He did as he thought TR would have wished, finally breaking up Standard Oil and initiating proceedings against US Steel. In fact he started twice as many anti—trust suits as Roosevelt himself. TR denounced all this as `archaic' and said Taft should have introduced regulation instead. Taft tried to rationalize (and reduce) high US tariffs, again something he thought TR wished; but this merely led Congress to make a fool of him and split the party. He practiced what became known as `dollar diplomacy' in Central America to boost US trade and he sent the marines into Nicaragua. But his appointment of a customs inspector there without the Senate's `advice and consent' got him into trouble with Congress. His worst fault, in TR's eyes, was to sack the Chief Forester, Gifford Pinchot, whom Taft found `insubordinate' and a `crank.' Pinchot promptly went out to Africa to contact TR on his safari and make his complaints. TR charged home, processing through New York in June 1910 in a fourteen—carriage parade from the Battery to 59th Street, with luggage containing horns, heads, and skins from 13,ooo specimens, ranging from elephants and rhinos to the rare dikdik, an antelope smaller than a jack—rabbit. At first he declined to criticize his successor. But he would not dine at the White House either.

Taft seemed a throwback to the mediocrities who had served in the long, booming decades between Lincoln and Roosevelt when it was the businessmen who seemed to be running the country. Under Taft the country seemed to run itself, as it plunged into the era of the automobile and began to contemplate the air—age. Ford's Model T was now well and truly launched and selling in hundreds of thousands, as Ford himself coined the first of his one—liners: `A customer can have a car painted any color as long as it's black' (1909). The same month four women, Alice Huyler Ramsey, Nettle R. Powell, Margaret Atwood, and Hermine Jahns, became the first to drive all the way from New York to San Francisco in a Maxwell—Biscoe runabout costing $500. Meanwhile Cadillac developed the first electric self—starter, incorporated in its 1912 models. The Wright Brothers, pioneer aviators, set up the first public company, with a capital of $1 million, to manufacture aircraft for general sale. America was swiftly acquiring a productionline economy, with high wages, high spending, and high output.

Taft seemed irrelevant, especially after the Republicans lost the House in the mid—term elections. He continued to push through TR's policies, as he understood them, beating his anti—trust suit record by eighty to twenty—five and taking over more land for public use in four years

than TR had in eight (including withdrawing oil lands from public sale for the fifth time). But, whatever he actually did, he appeared to do nothing, having an ineffaceably statuesque image in the voters' minds. In February 1912, meeting in Chicago, a group of seven Republican governors called on Roosevelt to become a candidate at the hope that so far as possible the people may be given the chance, through direct primaries, to express their preference.' This referred to the new primary system which, beginning in South Carolina in 1896, reduced the power of party bosses, replacing state conventions by direct elections as the mechanism for selecting party candidates. This change spread over the South and in 1903 was adopted in Wisconsin, thence taking over a growing number of Northern states too. Roosevelt was thus able to put up in thirteen state primaries in 1912 and in all but two he won, beating Taft even in his own state, Ohio.

Hence when TR entered the Republican convention he was only loo votes short of the nomination, in theory anyway. But the party bosses ran the procedures in exactly the same way as they had done for Roosevelt in 1904 and came out with the same result—the incumbent President and party leader was renominated. TR called it `naked theft' and bolted the party. In August he held a Progressive Party convention in Chicago and declared himself `fit as a bull moose,' `stripped to the buff,' and `ready for the fight.' TR called his ideas the `New Nationalism.' He proposed to regulate business by a federal trade commission with formidable powers, to end the tariff rows once and for all by having an objective tariff commission settle them `on a scientific basis,' and to narrow the extremes between rich and poor by graduated income tax and death duties. These were popular ideas and TR was a great campaigner, even appearing, on one campaign photograph, to be crossing a river on the back of his favorite bull moose. He beat Taft easily by 4,119,582 to 3,485,082 and got 88 electoral college votes against a mere 8 for Taft. But in effect he had split the huge majority Republican vote into two, thus allowing the minority party to get home with 6,293,110 votes. This was considerably fewer than Bryan got in 1908 but with the Republicans split and losing state after Northern state, the Democrats collected a massive total of 435 electoral college votes. So their candidate, Woodrow Wilson, was now president and a new time had come.

PART SIX

‘The First International Nation’

Melting—Pot America, 1912 —1929

The administration of Woodrow Wilson (1856—1924) is one of the great watersheds of American history. Until this time, America had concentrated almost exclusively on developing its immense natural resources by means of a self—creating and self—recruiting meritocracy. Americans enjoyed a laissez—faire society which was by no means unrestrained but whose limitations to their economic freedom were imposed by their belief in a God—ordained moral code rather than a government one devised by man. The rise of rural Populism, the development of muckraking, the appearance in the big cities of middleclass Progressivism, and, not least, the romantic reformism and altruistic nationalism of Theodore Roosevelt—all these were premonitory symptoms of change. And under Wilson the changes actually began to take place, hastened and accelerated by America's fortuitous involvement in a catastrophic world war which destroyed Old Europe for ever.'

Wilson came of Scots—Irish Calvinist stock on both sides of his family. His forebears struck deep roots in the South and, strictly speaking, Wilson was a Virginian, with all that is implied in the title. The South ran in his blood and creaked in his bones and sometimes—not oftenwent to his head. But by training and temperament and self—formation he was very much a British—American. He once let slip that he wished to pursue Jeffersonian ends by Hamiltonian means—a revealing remark. The statesman he most admired was the great reforming Liberal, William Ewart Gladstone, himself a Liverpool—Scot of Calvinist ancestry. His intellectual mentor was the worldly—wise English banker—editor Walter Bagehot, who ran the *Economist* for many years and wrote the pellucid but laid—back prose Wilson sought to imitate. Wilson's Calvinism went deep. As a youth he experienced a characteristic `awakening,' believing himself one of the elect. He retained throughout his life what he termed `faith, pure and simple,' and an accompanying conviction that he was chosen to lead, to teach, and to inspire. He told a White House visitor in 1915: `My life would not be worth living were it not for the driving power of religion.' Religious certitudes undoubtedly helped to bolster his political certitudes, not to say the confident self—righteousness with which he advanced his aims. The anticlerical and cynical French elite later dubbed him a `lay pope.' As Disraeli said of Gladstone, it was typical of him `not merely to keep aces up his sleeve but to insist God put them there,' and similarly Wilson, who played hardball politics always when he felt he needed to, insinuated that he did so not by personal choice but at the urgent direction of providence. No one, not even Lincoln, used the quasi—religious rhetoric of the grand American tradition more effectively, or succeeded so often in conveying the impression that to oppose his policies was not merely unreasonable but downright immoral.

Yet Wilson's family was also notable for teaching, wide reading, and nonconformity, as well as Calvinism, and there were persistent liberal elements in his makeup. He remained too much of a Southerner to do anything for blacks—quite the contrary—but he was almost totally without religious prejudice. Joseph Patrick Tumulty (1879—1960), who was his secretary as both governor and president, and perhaps his closrst advisor, was a devout Roman Catholic, which raised sharp eyebrows at the time. And Wilson forced through, against fierce opposition, the appointment of the Boston lawyer Louis Brandeis as the first Jew on the Supreme Court in 1916. Brandeis, for his part, noted after their first meeting in 1912 that Wilson `has all the qualities for an ideal president—strong, simple and truthful, able, open—minded, eager to learn and deliberate.'

This tribute is worth setting against the usual image of Wilson as inflexible and arrogant. But the truth is, there were many Wilsons, just as there were many Jeffersons. He is not exactly elusive but he is Janus—faced and protean. No more complex personality ever ruled the White

house. To begin with, he was not, as might be supposed from his mature career, an example of the relentless drive which his contemporary Max Weber had just (1905—6) described as the `Protestant Ethic,' springing from the `Salvation Panic.' Wilson did not even learn to read until he was nine. He may have been dyslexic. More likely he was lazy and unmotivated. Upbraiding letters from his father suggest he long remained reluctant to work hard and, in particular, to become a successful lawyer as Wilson Sr always wished. What he wanted to do, as he eventually discovered almost by accident, was to teach and write, above all to teach and write about the workings of government.

Once Wilson had discovered this calling, and had overcome his father's opposition, his career took off and he worked with staggering dedication. He came to academic life at exactly the right moment. The American university was coming of age and had entered a period of unprecedented expansion and improvement. At Harvard Charles William Eliot (1834—1926), a mathematician and chemist, who entered his forty—year tenure as president of the college in 1869, transformed the university, widening and adding to its courses, founding graduate schools, establishing exchange professorships with France and Germany, developing an `elective system' of undergraduate courses in which students played a part in their own curricula, ending sectarianism in the divinity school and introducing professionalism in law and medicine and, not least, founding Radcliffe (1879) as an offshoot for women. Seth Low (1850—1916), a former mayor of Brooklyn and future mayor of New York, turned Columbia, where he was president 1890—1901, into a massive engine of scholarship. At Johns Hopkins, where Wilson taught, Daniel Colt Gilman (1831—1908), having revolutionized scientific teaching at Yale, introduced as its first president the best traditions of German scholarship and built up one of the world's finest graduate schools. Such women's colleges as Bryn Mawr, founded (1880) near Philadelphia as the first non—sectarian place of higher education for women, were rapidly training women for virtually all the professions. Wilson taught there too and proved himself admirably qualified to bring women not only into the circle of academia but into extensive areas of active working life hitherto closed to them.'

Wilson was not content with teaching: he wrote prodigiously. The growth of the universities themselves, and the variety of subjects taught there, produced a voracious demand for textbooks, specialist publishers, and expert compilers of handbooks. It would not be quite true to say that Wilson invented Politics as a subject. But he rendered it fashionable and supplied it with much of its working material. He made a name for himself with an expanded PhD thesis (one of the first to employ this career—launch catapult effectively) called *Congressional Government* (1885), still in print nearly 120 years later. He followed it with a number of highly regarded and much reprinted standard works, such as *The State: Elements of Historical and Practical Politics* (1889), a five—part *History of the American People* (1902), and *Constitutional Government in the United States* (1908). To a great extent he became the American Bagehot.

During these years Wilson came to the conclusion that America's system of government, though the best in the world, could be further improved. One way of doing it, he concluded, was by modernizing and purifying the American academy, and by making it into a national seminar for training idealistic young men who wished to work in the public service. When he joined the faculty at Princeton, of which he was a devoted alumnus, in 1890, he gradually came to believe that fundamental changes were needed, and the conviction led him to seek power there. It was an old—fashioned New Jersey institution noted chiefly for the training of Presbyterian clergymen when Wilson became its first lay president in 1902. His vigorous attempts to transform it into America's—and the world's—greatest university, by no means unsuccessful, were ultimately

frustrated by what he saw as the malign exercise of the power of money. His grandiose plans met with opposition; and his opponents learned to entice wealthy alumni into providing huge conditional endowments skillfully designed to make Wilson's philosophy of education ineffective.

Indeed it is one of the paradoxes of American college life that at the time of, or shortly after, its greatest period of consolidation and elevation, it developed customs and integuments which made it also peculiarly resistant to moral and civic improvement—or, rather, resistant to changes not sanctioned by the ruling class of which it was the training ground. In 1890 only about 3 percent of the appropriate age—group went to college, one in five of whom went to what a contemporary called the fourteen `great American universities,' the inner group of which consisted of the Ivy League, who played American football against each other. The Ivy League ascendancy was underpinned by the leading prep schools, or independent private boarding schools, usually denominational, which acted as the equivalent of the English `public school' system. Henry James, in denouncing America for its lack of social density and interest, chose to ignore these layers of class and culture, though they already existed during his time.

St Paul's School, in Concord, New Hampshire, was opened in 1856, when James was thirteen, and was among the larger ones, with 400 boys. It was Episcopalian and so Anglophile that for many years it played cricket rather than baseball. Its headmaster, Dr Samuel Drury, forced all the boys to learn the Sermon on the Mount and its atmosphere was strict: Charles `Chips' Bohlen, later a leading American diplomat, was accused of `bad attitude' and expelled for inflating a condom and playing football with it. Smaller (200 boys) and later (1884), Groton was also High Church Episcopalian. For sixty years its headmaster, called the rector, was Endicott Peabody, who had been educated in England at Cheltenham College and Trinity, Cambridge, and who wore a white bowtie (as well as cap and gown) like an Eton master. One of its founders was J. P. Morgan and it was particularly well endowed. Its declared purpose was `to develop a manly Christian character.' Its motto was *Cui Servire Est Regnare*. Boys attended chapel every day (twice on Sunday). They were allowed only 25 cents a week pocket—money, of which 5 cents had to go into the collection plate. On the other hand their shoes were polished overnight and there was no bed—making or table—waiting. George Biddle, its 104th graduate, wrote: `95 per cent of the boys came from what they considered the aristocracy of America. Their fathers belonged to the Somerset, the Knickerbocker, the Philadelphia or the Baltimore Club. Among them was a goodly slice of the wealth of the nation.' The school's first 1,000 boys included one president, two secretaries of state, two governors, three senators, and nine ambassadors, though most alumni went into Wall Street. The President was, of course, Theodore Roosevelt and, when it celebrated its first twenty years, he declared to the boys: `Much has been given you. Therefore we have a right to expect much from you.' TR denounced E. H. Harriman as `an Enemy of the Republic' and `a malefactor of great wealth,' perhaps unaware that he had become a notable benefactor of Groton, his son Averell Harriman becoming, in turn, one of its more celebrated alumni—this being precisely the kind of paradox in which Henry James delighted.9 Besides sons of the rich, Groton liked to take in the offspring of the respectable clergy. Thus Dean Acheson, a future secretary of state, whose father was rector of the Episcopalian Church at Middletown, Connecticut, was there alongside Averell Harriman. There were many `egalitarian' customs. When Cass Canfield, the future publisher, arrived at Groton, a boy said: `So you're the new kid,' and punched him in the face. This was known as `pumping,' and also included being held upside down and drenched. Acheson and Harriman were both 'pumped.'

Other key prep schools were the Hill School, Philadelphia, which was distinguished academically and where all the boys learned Latin and Greek, and English, as opposed to American, history, and the Peddle School, near Princeton, New Jersey, which specialized in Greek history, language, and philosophy. These schools fed all the Ivy League colleges. St Paul's and Groton boys (the latter known as Grotties) tended to go to either Harvard, Yale, or Princeton. In 1906—32, for instance, 405 Groton boys applied to Harvard; only three were rejected. Until the 1960s, the great majority of Yale students came from prep schools and 20 percent of them were the sons of Yale men.

These Ivy League colleges were self—contained and tended to see their own university as all—important. The Yale football coach used to say: `Gentlemen, today you play Harvard. Never again in your life will you do anything so important.' Yale had its own term for courage/determination—sand. These colleges had internal class—distinctions based on their messing and lodging arrangements. At Princeton the top club was the Ivy, which took in only eleven men a year. The future diplomat George Kennan, who came to Princeton from a military academy, quickly learned `Princeton manners.' On his first day he asked another student the time. The student puffed on his cigar, blew the smoke in Kennan's face, and walked away. Kennan got into a second—grade club, the Key and Seal, and apologized to his father for the fee. Then his money ran out and he was forced to eat, as he put it, `among the nonclub pariahs' in Upperclass Commons. At Yale, the best club was the Skull and Bones, which took in only fifteen seniors. Henry Stimson, President Taft, Henry Luce, Justice Potter Stewart, and the Bundy clan were among its members. To be `tapped for Bones' was the greatest honor Yale had to offer, and Tap Day was a red—letter event in the Yale calendar. The happy man was told: `Skull and Bones. Go to your room!' It had its own rituals in its inner sanctum at `322,' and members spent two evenings a week exploring each other's characters in what was essentially a social therapy—group. They never spoke of its affairs or even admitted they were members. Averell Harriman had three wives without ever mentioning the word `Bones' to any of them. Just beneath Bones came the Scroll and Key: Dean Acheson was in it, along with Cole Porter. Below came the Turtles, the Grill Room Grizzlies, the Hogans, the Mohicans, and the DKW.

At Harvard there was the Gold Coast, whose clubs existed mainly for boys from church prep schools. It was not essential to join a club: Walter Lippmann and John Reed belonged to none but still made their names at Harvard, as well as in journalism in later life. You joined a `preliminary club' like the Hasty Pudding; then a `waiting club' like the Sphinx—Kalumet; then a `final club.' The Porcellian, founded in 1791, was the most difficult to get into. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, a notable Grottie, said that rejection by `the Porc' was the bitterest blow of his life. Unlike Bones, election was not recognition of performance: as Lord Melbourne said of the Order of the Garter, `Thank God, there is no damned merit about it.' Paul Nitze, another high performer in public life, observed: `The club *prided itself* on not being based on merit in any way'—just money, blood, and, perhaps most important, charm, like `Pop' at Eton. These institutions and connections were important insofar as they had consequences in public life later, since they bred loyalties and intimacies which meant that one man was chosen for high office when another was overlooked. They also acted as conservative, breaking forces in university reform, since school, college, and club allegiances had an enormous effect on donations by wealthy alumni, the way in which the money was handed over and for what purposeand the freedom of action of college presidents as a result.

It was the abuse, as Wilson saw it, of money power in the etiolated atmosphere of the senior common room, the trustee boardroom, and, ultimately, the campus itself which turned him into a

liberal reformer not just in academia but in a much wider field. The tremendous internal rows at Princeton, leading to his resignation in i9io, caused Wilson to stop just studying politics and become an active performer in the game—and an astonishingly masterful one too. Again, he chose his moment well. The return of Roosevelt to active politics in 1910 introduced, as we have noted, a period of party confusion from which the Democrats in general, and Wilson in particular, profited. Within three years, this austere—seeming Presbyterian college president, who had compiled *Congressional Government* without once having set foot in the Capitol, was installed—via a spell as governor of New Jersey—in the White House. In state politics, too, Wilson took advantage of a trend. The City bosses had been all—powerful since the Civil War, but, in the year before Wilson emerged, bosses like Richard Croker at Tammany Hall, Abe Ruef in San Francisco, T. C. Platt in New York State, and Matthew Stanley Quay in Philadelphia had been stripped of their feathers. New Jersey politics were particularly squalid, but the Democratic bosses there were now running scared and they thought that a distinguished and seemingly incorruptible college president like Wilson would give them camouflage and a bit of class. So they made him governor. But the man they imagined would be their high—minded puppet soon made himself their absolute master, displaying in the process a skill at intrigue, maneuver, and elevated skulduggery—and a nice sense of balance between idealism and *realpolitik*—which left them bitter but powerless.

Wilson's success as governor of New Jersey, the prestige he secured for himself as the installer of an honest regime in a notoriously corrupt state, made him a surprise top—runner for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1912. William Jennings Bryan was still only fifty—two and retained a huge following among the farmers and Westerners, but he accepted the old baseball adage, `Three strikes and you're out,' and performed a last great service to the Democratic Party by helping to secure Wilson's nomination. In terms of registered voters, the Republicans were still by far the larger organization and must have beaten Wilson had they remained united, the Democrats themselves losing many votes to the socialist Eugene Debs, who scored nearly 900,000. As it was, Wilson scored only 41.8 percent of the votes cast, the lowest percentage for an elected president since Lincoln's 39.9 in 1860. Thus does providence intervene: for the second time in its history, the United States got itself a great president because the ruling party split. Nevertheless, Wilson fought a notable campaign and enormously impressed those who heard him. Though he had been in politics only three years, and never sat in Congress, he quickly discovered that his lecture—room skills served him well for platform oratory. In the days before amplification, his fine voice and admirable, often spontaneous, choice of words could hold audiences of up to 35,000 spellbound.' Moreover, as a Southerner of liberal views with a Northern power—base in an urban state, he was able to construct, for the first time, the classic coalition of Southern conservatives and Northern and Western progressives that was to remain the Democratic mainstay till the end of the 1960s.

Wilson's arrival in the White House in 1913 was a perfect instance of Victor Hugo's saying, `Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose time has come.' Since the Civil War, the United States had become by far the world's richest country, with an industrial economy which made all others on earth seem small, and it had done so very largely through the uncoordinated efforts of thousands of individual entrepreneurs. The feeling had grown that it was time for the community as a whole, using the resources of the United States Constitution, to impose a little order on this new giant and to dress him in suitable clothes, labeled `The Public Interest.' Theodore Roosevelt had already laid out some of these clothes, and Wilson was happy to steal them. And under the

despised President Taft, Congress had been encouraged by the White House to put through two constitutional amendments, Sixteen and Seventeen, both of which were ratified and became law in 1913. The first authorized a federal income tax, and thus placed in the hands of Washington a fiduciary power which was to be used with ruthless and cumulatively overwhelming impact over the next eighty years. The second democratized the Senate by stipulating that senators must be elected directly by the people instead of indirectly by state legislatures. This was part of the process whereby institutional changes such as the primary were removing power from the party machines and the bosses and turning it over to the voters.

These changes in the Constitution, and the fact that both the House and the Senate were now in Democratic hands, cleared the decks for one of the most comprehensive legislative programs ever enacted by a single US administration. Wilson had to pay one or two political debts by, for instance, making Bryan his Secretary of State. He also found the politicians adamantly opposed to Cabinet rank for one or two of his personal friends. Thus Walter Hines Page (1855—1918), Wilson's fellow—student and radical educational reformer, had to be content with the ambassadorship in London, and Brandeis, whom Wilson wanted to make attorney—general, was told that it would lead to what the *Boston journal* called `a general collapse' in banking and trust circles. All the same, Wilson formed a strong administration, much to his liking. The key figure was the Treasury Secretary, William Gibbs McAdoo (1863—1941), who had managed Wilson's campaign and was soon to marry one of his daughters. Another important appointment was Josephus Daniels (1862—1948), the Southern newspaper editor who had run Wilson's publicity, now made navy secretary. Like McAdoo he proved a first—class administrator and the choice was significant, not least because he immediately proposed as his assistant secretary the young Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882—1945) who being a Hyde Park Roosevelt was a Democrat. Wilson greeted the proposal with one word: `Capital,' thus establishing on the ladder of promotion one of the most powerful figures in American history. Wilson accepted, being a good student of history, the need to balance interests. Thus he put two political choices, James C. MacReynolds and Albert S. Burleson, into the posts of attorney—general and postmaster—general. This enabled him to make one progressive, Franklin K. Lane, secretary of the interior, and another, Lindley M. Garrison, secretary of war. A third liberal, William Cox Redfield, took up the post of commerce secretary, and for labor secretary Wilson turned to his namesake, William B. Wilson, a congressman who had helped to organize the United Mineworkers of America.

Wilson also had a kitchen cabinet, presided over by Tumulty but whose most important member, Colonel Edward Mandell House (1858—1938) was only a semi—official advisor. House was a Texan who had pushed through Wilson's nomination and was now a big financial wheel. Oddly enough, in 1911 he had published a political novel, *Philip Dru: Administrator*, in which a benevolent dictator imposed a corporate income tax, abolished the protective tariff, and broke up the `credit trust'—a remarkable adumbration of Wilson and his first term. House would come from New York to sit up with the President late into the night, plotting and arguing. Another, increasingly important member was a young ship's doctor, Captain Cary T. Grayson (1878—1938), whom Wilson made his medical attendant, and much more. Wilson was the first president to establish regular press conferences, holding them twice a week in the East Room. They were attended by hundreds of reporters, but the rules Wilson imposed about quoting him, and the evasiveness of his actual replies, rather defeated their purpose.

Nevertheless, no administration in American history got off to a better start than Wilson's. The enactment of his program involved a revolution in thinking, not only on the part of the

Democratic Party but among the progressive intelligentsia generally. It had been long in coming but under Wilson it actually took place in a few short years. In the early 19th century, and for long afterwards, the radical, democratic forces in American society (and not only in America: the same pattern is discernible in Britain) tried to limit the role of government. To Jefferson, and indeed to Jackson, big, heavy—handed government was associated with reactionary forces, with kings and emperors and the federalists and, later, with Wall Street. Heavy taxation, especially through such devices as personal income tax, was a conspiracy to steal money from the hard—working population and squander it among the officeholding elites. A central bank was a mechanism to confer privileges on a banking plutocracy. For Washington to acquire power was merely to take it away from the people and place it in the greedy hands of undemocratic elites. To some extent this view survived the Civil War, in which huge powers were acquired by a Republican federal government to destroy states' rights. What it did not survive was the rapid growth of Big Business and corporate power in the decades which followed. Gradually, the progressive intelligentsia, and the bulk of the Democratic Party, began to see a strong federal government, with wide powers of intervention, as the defender of the ordinary man and woman against the excesses of corporate power. The notion of the Public Sector (good; needs to be expanded) as opposed to the Private Sector (potentially bad; needs to be invigilated and regulated) began to take possession of the minds of the do—gooders. For this purpose, it was necessary for the state to expand its revenues. Therefore a personal income tax, especially if it possessed progressive characteristics, and therefore was income—redistributive as well as revenue—raising, was a desirable institution. At the end of the loth century we have come to regard the state as, at best, a necessary evil, the only means whereby certain needful tasks can be accomplished, and at worst as an unrivaled oppressor. We have to cast our minds back to the intellectual atmosphere of 1913, when the state, not only in the United States but in many other countries, was seen as a knight in shining armor, coming to the rescue of the poor and the weak and the victimized, and doing with objective benevolence what otherwise would be done selfishly by greedy aggregations of private wealth.

It was Wilson who first introduced America to big, benevolent government. We must not exaggerate the extent of the revolution he carried through. Nor must we think that all his actions, and Congress's, expanded government power. In his first year in office, for instance, the Underwood Tariff Act reversed the protectionist, Republican trend of the last sixty years, removing duties designed to protect industrial vested interests, and thus reducing prices for the many. But, the same year, the Federal Reserve system was created to bring order into the US money market and to provide a mechanism for controlling credit centrally and managing crises when they occurred—or, better still, insuring they did not occur. For the Democrats to bring in a reserve bank was a reversal of everything Andrew Jackson had stood for. But by 1913 virtually everyone agreed it was necessary. Even J. P. Morgan, perhaps one should say especially J. P. Morgan, thought it was preferable that a federal institution should conduct the kind of crisismanagement he had performed in his library, more particularly since no one ever again acquired quite the same moral authority in Wall Street that Morgan possessed in 1907. So the Fed came into existence and has been there ever since. But it must be said it took a long time to bring perfect order into America's complex, many—tiered paper—money system. A Treasury report compiled as late as 1942 showed that nine types of officially approved money were then still in circulation—gold certificates, silver dollars, silver certificates, Treasury Notes of 1890, subsidiary metal coins, United States banknotes or greenbacks, national banknotes, Federal Reserve banknotes, and Federal Reserve notes. Creating the Fed was merely the beginning of a

long, distracted story of trying to prevent the world's largest economy from spinning itself out of control.

In the following year, 1914, the Wilson administration, working with the Democratic Congress, established the Federal Trade Commission, a non—partisan body of five members appointed by the President for seven—year terms. The FTC was empowered to demand annual reports from corporations and to investigate business practices. It was given a statutory duty to investigate and control monopolistic practices, to prevent adulteration or mislabeling, to frustrate the emergence of combinations formed to fix retail prices or maintain them, and to expose the false claims of patents. It was designed to be preventative rather than punitive and was endowed with the right to issue `cease and desist' orders to errant firms. By 1920 the FTC had issued nearly 400 such orders and had proved itself (or so it was said) a success. Its work was complemented, also in 1914, by another statute, the Clayton AntiTrust Act, which filled holes in the Sherman Act and also exempted unions from some anti—trust provisions, thus leading Samuel Gompers to hail it as `labor's charter of freedom.' These two Acts are often said to have `brought the era of the Robber Barons to an end,' but the truth is it was ending anyway or had indeed ended, as the sheer size of the American economy, and the degree of natural competition, made cornering and monopolies and oligopolies increasingly difficult to establish, or at least to maintain for long. But the Clayton Act certainly made competition easier and the FTC, besides hunting down the obvious economic malefactor, reassured the public that the financial world now had a sheriff to watch over it, and that the economy was policed, after a fashion.

The Wilson administration did nor forget the farmers or industrial workers either. The Federal Farm Loan Act (1916), which created cheap agricultural credits, and the Adamson Act, which introduced the eight—hour day, were the payoff for these two vital groups in the Wilson—Democratic constituency. The eight—hour day was designed to avert a railroad strike, and was supposed to apply chiefly to railroad workers. But it became a benchmark for all industry. Be it noted, however, that Wilson did not even try to introduce the welfare state, in the primitive version, chiefly consisting of old—age pensions, which David Lloyd George and Winston Churchill were then constructing in Britain. That had to wait until the 1930s, or even later. But the federal government quickly took advantage of the Sixteenth Amendment to levy income tax, which in 1913 was established at 1 percent on taxable net income above $3,000 ($4,000 for married couples), rising slowly to a top rate of 7 percent on incomes above $500,000. This was denounced by Wall Street as class legislation, and in a sense it was. Moreover, the onset of World War One showed the awesome possibilities of the new tax, with rates rising almost vertically to 77 percent, something completely new in American history.

Indeed, it was the impact of the war, even more than Wilson's prewar legislative and administrative program, which helped to build up the great historic watershed in the way America is governed. And the man common to both phases, apart from Wilson himself, was McAdoo. Indeed it is probably right to see him as a key figure in zothcentury American history, who never quite got his deserts in the political arena at the time, or has received the historic accolade he earned. William McAdoo was born in 1863, the year of the Gettysburg disaster, as it appeared in his hometown, Marietta, Georgia. He went to the University of Tennessee, became a lawyer, and soon branched out into company promotion, especially of street cars. As a Southerner, he found it useless to go to Wall Street in search of money, and when his venture failed for lack of cash, he transferred himself bodily to New York City. It was at this point he lengthened his name to William Gibbs McAdoo. Like Lincoln he was immensely tall (six feet two), lanky, ungainly, explosive, and voluble; but he now wore black suits and practiced

silences. He proved himself expert at exploiting bankruptcy opportunities, especially in rail, and he built or rather finished the Hudson tubes, under the river, linking Manhattan and New Jersey. He rode the populist wave at a time (1911) when the housewives were demonstrating in the street against rising meat prices, when outrage had been provoked by the wicked Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, and when Cornelius Vanderbilt had incited hatred by saying `The public be damned' (it was the shareholders *he* cared for). McAdoo was a 'publicbe—pleased' man. His railroad listened to public complaints. He took the opportunity of linking various unpopular trends together to blame them all on Wall Street's monopoly of credit and make a Southern point. He hailed Wilson as the first Southerner to be elected since Zachary Taylor in 1849. It was a great day for McAdoo when Wilson addressed 1,200 members of the Southern Society, the New York network of Southern gents who met annually on Washington's birthday, in the ballroom of the Waldorf on December 17, 1912—the first Southern President to speak to them since their foundation in 1885. But it was the South with a difference. The Society made a point of cheering the name of Lincoln, whom McAdoo called `the greatest man God ever created.' Wilson's slogan was `Sectionalism is dead!' Both men argued that Sherman had done the South a favor by destroying plantation society and opening the way for capitalist development—the point was valid though it did not really begin to produce results until the 1950s.

McAdoo has been described as `the greatest American Treasury Secretary since Alexander Hamilton,' and he was a true federalist in the sense he shifted the monetary system from Wall Street to Washington. He studied the investigation of the House Committee on Banking and Currency, led by Arsene Pujo of Louisiana, and in particular its interrogation of J. P. Morgan himself. The committee worked out that a group of New York banks held 341 seats on the boards of 112 corporations worth over $22 billion. Morgan assured the committee that his criterion in judging creditworthiness was not wealth but character—'A man I do not trust could not get money [from the banks] on all the bonds in Christendom.' In effect Morgan had been the central banker. But what McAdoo did, in creating the Fed, was not merely to make a geographical shift from New York to Washington but to decentralize the system, with twelve regional banks headed by twelve executives nominally independent of both the Treasury and the bankers. It was, as he put it, `A blow in the solar—plexus of the money monopoly.'

The passing of the watershed towards a strong, populist state was, therefore, very much a Southern operation. Even the income tax was the work of a Tennessee politician, Cordell Hull (1871—1955), later F. D. Roosevelt's Secretary of State. Without income tax the United States could not in practice have played an active role in international affairs, or begun to address the inequalities in American society. This Southern comeback might have been crowned by the selection of McAdoo to succeed Wilson in due course. But Wilson would never acknowledge him as his crown prince. This may have been because Wilson thought him unfitted for the highest office. McAdoo had some of the spirit of Lloyd George, with whom he was often compared, a skill in taking advantage of events as they unfolded to push his chances, and build up a personal bureaucratic empire as occasion offered. One colleague, Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War from 1916, said: 'McAdoo had the greatest lust for power I ever saw.' Charles Hamlins, Wilson's society friend, was harsher: `The most selfish man I ever met.' The *Nation* described him as `a thorough imperialist, eager for a big army and navy and the mailed fist, a sort of American Curzon and Milner without European experience and international vision but with plenty of American vigor and push added.' The *Nation* concluded: `His election to the White House would be an unqualified misfortune.' But that was never seriously on the cards. Serving Wilson prevented McAdoo from openly campaigning or maneuvering for the presidency, and by

the time Wilson was stricken, politics had moved on and it was too late. It would have been a different matter if Wilson had treated McAdoo as his heir apparent. But he was never prepared to do that.

There was indeed a streak of selfish egotism in Wilson, a self—regarding arrogance and smugness, masquerading as righteousness, which was always there and which grew with the exercise of power. Wilson, the good and great, was corrupted by power, and the more he had of it the deeper the corruption bit, like acid in his soul. But there are, as always with Wilson, complexities. There was a hedonistic streak too, a bit of Southern dash. August Heckscher, Wilson's most recent biographer, has traced the stages whereby the original Thomas Wilson, known universally as Tommy, transmogrified himself first into Thomas W. Wilson, then T. Woodrow Wilson and finally the Jovian deity, Woodrow Wilson. The mature Wilson, stern, aloof, almost awesome, high—principled, incorruptible, and Olympian, was to some extent a construct, emerging from an earlier and more meretricious figure, not afraid of being thought dressy. Heckscher has unearthed a memorandum in which the young Wilson itemized his wardrobe, listing 103 articles, including many pairs of spats, pearl—colored trousers, and a blue vest. This earlier Wilson was boisterous, joked, sang songs, and told stories brilliantly. Until his second term, Wilson retained this last gift: along with Lincoln and Reagan, he was the President who used the apt and funny tale to most effect.

Wilson was also fond of women, highly sexed, even passionate, and capable of penning memorable love—letters. His first wife, Ellen, was a proto—feminist, and their marriage was a grand love—affair. But it did not prevent Wilson striking up, in due course, an acquaintance with a frisky widow, whom he met in his favorite vacation—haunt, Bermuda. This developed into a liaison, which led in time to a bit of genteel blackmail. Ellen's death was nonetheless a bitter blow. But Wilson soon recovered and found a second great love, another merry widow, the forty—two—year—old Edith Bolling Galt, like Ellen an emancipated woman, who owned Washington's most fashionable jewelry store and was famous for being the first woman in the city to drive her own car. She was tall, Junoesque, and `somewhat plump by modern American standards,' as one of the President's secret—servicemen put it. She became Wilson's mistress. A young attache at the British embassy told the story that `When the President proposed to Mrs Galt, she was so surprised she fell out of bed.' This tale reached the ears of the White House and a complaint was made to the British ambassador, Sir Cecil Spring—Rice. Be that as it may, when Wilson *did* propose, and secured the consent of this statuesque lady, he was described by an associate as jigging dance—steps on the sidewalk and singing the current vaudeville hit, `Oh, you beautiful doll, you great big beautiful doll.'

This light—hearted Wilson, however, disappeared, never to return, when the immense and horrific conflict in Europe eventually engulfed the United States too. The Great War of 1914—18 was the primal tragedy of modern world civilization, the main reason why the 20th century turned into such a disastrous epoch for mankind. The United States became a great power in the decades after the Civil War, and even an imperial power in 1898. But it was not yet a world power in the sense that it regularly conferred with the major European states, known as ,the powers,' and took part in their diplomatic arrangements. America was not an isolated power—was never at any time, it can be argued, isolationist—and had always had global dealings from its Republican inception. But it had prudently kept clear of the internal wrangles of Europe (as had Britain until 1903), and held itself well aloof from both the Entente Cordiale of Britain and France, with its links, through France, with Tsarist Russia, an anti—semitic autocracy held in abhorrence by most Americans, and with the militaristic, Teutonic, and to some extent racist

alliance of the Central European powers, the German and Austro—Hungarian empires. Thus the United States was a mere spectator during the frantic events which followed the murder of the Archduke Franz—Ferdinand of Austria on June 28, 1914, the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia, the Russian decision to support the Serbs, the French decision to support Russia, the German decision to support Austria and fight a two—front war against Russia and France, and Germany's consequential decision to send its armies through Belgium to enforce quick defeat on the French, and so the involvement of Britain and its dominion allies in support of Belgium. No one in Europe took any notice of Wilson's offer to mediate.

The United States had no quarrel with Germany: quite the contrary. As early as 1785 it had negotiated a commercial treaty with Prussia, at which time immigrants of German origin already constituted 9 percent of the population. The Prussians backed the Union during the Civil War and the United States looked with approval on the emergence of a united Germany. But from the 1870s on, economic, commercial, colonial, and even naval rivalry endangered German—American relations, especially in the Pacific. There was a sharp dispute over Samoa, which did not end until the territory was partitioned in 1899, and which left a legacy of suspicion. America began to dislike Germany for exactly the same reasons as the British did: the arrogance and naive pushiness with which the Germans, latecomers to global naval power and colonialism, sought their own `place in the sun.' In 1898, for instance, the Americans interpreted the presence of a strong German naval squadron near the Philippines as evidence of designs upon the islands. In the growing Anglo—German antagonism of 1900—14, the Special Relationship of Britain and America operated powerfully in Britain's favor. It is significant that in 1902, when both Germany and Britain punished Venezuela for reneging on its debts, President Roosevelt's administration criticized Germany but not Britain for violating the Monroe Doctrine.

All the same, there was at first no question of America entering the war. On August 4, immediately after it began, Wilson issued a proclamation of neutrality. Two weeks later he urged Americans to be `impartial in thought as well as in action.' There was no doubt about the sincerity of his pacifism at this stage. He loved and admired Americans but he was also in awe of them. His studies of American history and institutions had led him to recognize that, in addition to the broad—minded, pragmatic, tolerant, prudent, and worldly—wise strain in the American political personality, there was also a utopian, intolerant, and fundamentalist streak which leaped at any opportunity to crusade and impose its creeds. It was that streak which had brought about the Civil War and then waged it with relentless ferocity. So he warned; `Once lead this people into war and they'll forget there was ever such a thing as tolerance ... The spirit of ruthless brutality will enter into every fiber of our national life'. This warning was echoed by Randolph Bourne (1886—1918), speaking on behalf of the radicals, Pacifists, Progressives, and left—wing Democrats, who rightly saw that war would enormously accelerate the already perceptible growth of Big Government: `War is the health of the State.'

However, though not physically part of Europe, the United States was the western seaboard of the oceanic continuum which made it an integral part of the North Atlantic community. It was the Atlantic which dragged the United States into the Bonapartist wars, as we have seen, and it was the Atlantic which eventually made the United States an unwilling belligerent in Europe's suicidal conflict. On declaring war against Germany, Britain immediately imposed a blockade on German commerce, which had inescapable consequences for the United States. By 1916 American commerce with Germany had fallen to less than i percent of its 1914 value. In the same period, American trade with Britain (and also with its allies France and, from 1915, Italy) more than tripled. While Britain had learned lessons from the War of 1812 and imposed

commercial regulations in such a manner as to do the least possible harm to Anglo—American relations, German U—boat warfare had a catastrophic effect on America's view of Germany, at any rate at a popular level. On May 7, 1915 a German U—boat sank the British North Atlantic passenger liner *Lusitania*, without warning. It was an international crime without precedent or mitigating circumstance. Nearly 1,200 passengers drowned, 128 of them American.

In retrospect, this was a clear and adequate pretext for America entering the war, and thus shortening it—or even bringing it to a negotiated conclusion. But Wilson contented himself with securing German assurances that such atrocities would never be repeated Indeed, he fought the 1916 election on a neutrality platform against a formidable opponent in Charles Evans Hughes (1862—1948), a former New York governor who resigned as an associate justice of the Supreme Court to undertake the contest. Hughes had the backing of Theodore Roosevelt and a reunited Republican Party, and Wilson, while he expressed doubts about his ability to keep America out of the war, may have felt that anything less than a formal pledge to remain neutral would have cost him the contest. He even had to be careful in expressing proBritish sentiments. In April 1916 the Easter Rising in Dublin had aggravated relations between Britain and the Irish nationalists, and the American—Irish vote could have cost the Democrats the election. As it was, the vote was close. Wilson got 9,129,606 to Hughes' 8,538,221, a plurality of less than 600,000 (fewer than the Irish vote in New York alone), and the electoral college margin was only 277—254.

Immediately after the election, however, the increasing desperation of the German government led it, on January 21, 1917, to declare unrestricted submarine warfare on all shipping, neutral or belligerent, destined for Britain, and this led almost immediately to an appalling slaughter of seamen and civilian passengers in the Atlantic sea—lanes. Wilson broke off diplomatic relations with Berlin but declined to ask Congress for a declaration of war unless there were what he called `actual overt acts' against American citizens and property. These came in February—March, when U—boats sank a number of American ships. At the same time, the press published a secret telegram from the German Foreign Minister Arthur Zimmerman to the Mexican government proposing a German—Mexican offensive alliance against the United States under which Texas and other territories would be handed back to Mexico. The crassness of this attempt to stir up trouble on America's southern border clinched the matter. On April 2 Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war, and on the 6th Congress complied.

Wilson never considered the United States as a co—belligerent, as that would have implied he was mistaken in not entering the war earlier. He called America an `associated power,' and his own war—aims, set out as the Fourteen Points on January 8, 1918 in a desperate last—minute attempt to keep Russia in the war, were non—punitive and quite distinct from those of the Entente powers. Nonetheless, the Wilson administration's prosecution of the war was vigorous, not to say enthusiastic. Wilson had never been a man to eschew force when he believed, as he always did, he had moral justice on his side. He used American forces in the Caribbean and Central America more frequently than any other president, before or since. He invaded Mexico twice, once in 1914 when he sent US marines into Veracruz following a fracas which led to the arrest of American sailors, and again in 1916 when, on his orders, General John J. Pershing (1860—1948) chased the Mexican revolutionary leader 'Pancho' Villa back into his own country after he raided New Mexico. This was a serious business, involving many casualties and deep penetration into Mexico's territory, and US troops were not withdrawn until February 1917. Wilson was an aggressive man who, when crossed, was liable to turn vindictive. When a group of senators filibustered his proposal to arm US merchantmen, he issued a statement aimed at

producing sensational headlines: `A little group of willful men, representative of no opinion but their own, have rendered the great government of the United States helpless and contemptible.' The IrishAmerican leader, Jeremiah A. O'Leary, who accused him of being proBritish, got even rougher treatment: `Your telegram received. I would be deeply mortified to have you or anybody like you vote for me. Since you have access to many disloyal Americans I will ask you to convey this message to them.'

Wilson's war policy had four aspects, each in its own way ruthless. The first was propaganda. Of the 32 million Americans who were foreignborn or children of foreign parents, 10 million had ties with the Central Powers. Wilson formed the Committee on Public Information, headed by the journalist George Creel (1876—1953), who recruited 75,000 speakers, `Four Minute Men,' to give short war—aims talks at theater intermissions and other opportune times, to distribute l00 million pamphlets in various languages, to make movies, such as *The Kaiser: Beast of Berlin*, and to hold exhibitions of `frightfulness' committed by the `Barbaric Huns.' `Hamburger' was replaced by `Liberty Sandwich,' sauerkraut by `liberty cabbage.' Playing German music and teaching German were prohibited and many private manifestations against German culture were encouraged. Second, important changes in administration, involving new philosophies of government, were instituted, chiefly by and under McAdoo, who set up a personal bureaucratic empire under the name of the War Finance Corporation. This was a continuation of the prewar Wilson program by other means—war. Indeed, during this period, many federal government activities were set in motion, which went underground (or were discontinued) in the 1920s and then reemerged under Roosevelt's New Deal, to become a permanent part of the American system. Under McAdoo the cost of World War One to the federal government was ten times more than the cost of the Civil War and more than twice that of operating the federal government since its inception in 1789. The final direct cost to the US was about $112 billion, not counting £10 billion in US Treasury loans to Allied governments. As a consequence the US Internal Revenue Service became, for the first time, a serious factor in the lives of ordinary Americans.

By the time the United States joined the war, the European powers were in the process of harnessing their entire economies and populations to the effort of winning it. This often involved the state taking over the management and even the ownership of whole industries. In Germany, which was the most efficient in getting down to this task, the new system was called (by the man who was, in effect, the military dictator of the country, General Ludendorff) `War Socialism.' Its workings were so much admired by Vladimir Lenin that he made its structure and methods the basis for his own Sovietization of the entire Russian economy, after he seized power near the end of 1917. Britain and France followed the same road. So, to some extent, did the United States. McAdoo's War Finance Corporation, whose primary purpose was to help civilian firms to convert to war production, in fact took on many more tasks, and later became the model for the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, set up to combat the Depression by President Herbert Hoover (1874—1964). At the time, Hoover himself worked on the War Industries Board, a McAdoo body transformed from 1918 under `the wizard of Wall Street,' the self—made financier Bernard Baruch (1870—1965), into a hugely successful boost to production. This in turn became the model for the National Recovery Administration under F. D. Roosevelt's New Deal. And the National War Labor Board, set up to prevent strikes which hindered war output, became the model for the National Labor Relations Act (the Wagner Act) of 1935.

The war, as Wilson had predicted, brought a dramatic curtailment of national liberties and a large element of compulsion. This was the third important aspect of the Wilson war effort. The Espionage Act of June 15, 1917 (as amended by the Sedition Act of May 16, 1918) made it

possible for the authorities to prosecute many pacifists and members of left—wing groups such as the IWW and the Socialist Party. The constitutionality of this draconian law was upheld by the Supreme Court in *Schenck v. United States* (1919). At the same time, the Selective Service Act of May 18, 1917, which was ruled constitutional in *Arver v. United States* (1918), obliged over 23,900,000 men to register for service. Of these, 2,800,000 were inducted (some 16 percent of these did not report for duty, or immediately deserted, and were prosecuted). The draft provided 53 percent of the army's troops and 45 percent of all military personnel, so that the American forces in World War One were about one—half conscript.

The fourth aspect of Wilson's war policy was massive intervention in the conflict to insure the United States played the predominant role in restructuring the world when the Germans were finally overwhelmed. The US Army in January 1917 was 200,000 strong. By the end of the war, Wilson's efforts had expanded it to over 4 million, of whom 2 million served in the American Expeditionary Force and about 75 percent of them experienced actual fighting. The American First Army was formed in France in August 1917 and took over a section of the Western Front near Verdun, where the French forces were demoralized and mutinous. The provisional armistice signed by Lenin and Trotsky with the Germans at the beginning of 1918 meant that Germany could begin transferring divisions from its Eastern to its Western Front, and a devastating offensive was launched on March 21, 1918, which broke through the French and British armies, and enabled the advancing German forces to cross the Marne again. In the circumstances, the British agreed to serve under a French army supremo, Marechal Foch, and General Pershing, whose orders instructed him to make the AEF `a distinct and separate component' in the conflict, allowed army and marine units to join the line under Allied command. This helped to arrest the German advance, and in August 1918 the Allies went onto the offensive. Pershing was now able to deploy his formidable and rapidly growing resources as a separate command, both in the St Mihiel Campaign, 12—16 September, and in the Meuse—Argonne Offensive launched on September 28, in which he committed no fewer than 1,200,000 troops to battle. American casualties, especially in this last encounter, were heavy, and by the time the Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918, US war—deaths totalled 112,432, the vast majority on the Western Front. But in terms of effectives, America now had one of the largest and most powerful armies in Europe, and could convincingly claim that it had played a determining role in ending Germany's ability to continue the war.

Wilson did not regard himself as an international expert, and he told friends just before his inauguration in 1913, `It would be an irony of fate if my administration had to deal chiefly with foreign affairs."' When he was forced to enter the war, he prudently set up an organization called the Inquiry, in which 150 academic experts, working in the American Geographical Society Building in New York under the leadership of Colonel House and Dr S. E. Mezes, prepared in detail for the peacemaking. As a result, the American delegation was, throughout the peace—process at Versailles, by far the best informed and documented, and indeed was often the sole source of accurate information and upto—date maps. The British diplomatic historian Harold Nicolson, who was present, commented: `Had the Treaty of Peace been drafted solely by the American experts, it would have been one of the wisest as well as the most scientific documents ever devised.'

Unfortunately, as the British Foreign Secretary, A. J. Balfour, noted: `[Wilson's style] is very inaccurate. He is a first rate rhetorician and a very bad draftsman.' Wilson's draft plan for peace, the Fourteen Points, was set down on paper by him in a hurry, in January 1918, to counter

Lenin's Soviet propaganda that any peace treaty must be based `on the self—determination of the peoples.' He did not consult Britain and France in forming them. The first five points concerned general principles of the international order. `Open covenants, openly arrived at'—a characteristic Wilsonian flourish—should replace secret diplomacy (Lenin had just published the texts of all the secret treaties to which Russia had been a signatory). There should be freedom of the seas in peace and war. Barriers to international trade should be lifted. Armaments should be reduced by common agreement. Colonial claims should be adjusted, balancing the interests of the great powers and the aspirations of the subject peoples. The next eight points concerned territorial adjustments. Russia should get back its lost territory. Belgium should have its independence restored. Alsace—Lorraine should go back to France. Italy's frontier with Austria should be redrawn `along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.' The peoples of Austria—Hungary should have the `freest opportunity of autonomous development.' The Balkan frontiers should be rearranged `along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality.' Turkey should keep its independence but the non—Turkish peoples of the Ottoman Empire should be allowed `autonomous development.' International passage through the Dardanelles should be guaranteed, Serbia and Poland should be given access to the sea, and Poland should have its independence too. The final and fourteenth point called for the creation of `a general association of nations' with power to guarantee each nation's sovereignty and independence. On February 11, 1918 Wilson produced his `Four Principles,' which expanded the fourteenth point, and on September 27 what he called the `Five Particulars,' the first of which promised justice to friends and enemies alike.

The Germans still had an enormous army of 9 million men, which had destroyed Russian power on the Eastern Front and was conducting an orderly withdrawal on the Western. But Ludendorff was scared that, with the continuing American build—up, his army might face what he called a `catastrophe,' and the Wilson parade of principles seemed to offer a chance for Germany to extricate itself from a lost war with its territory largely intact, except for Alsace—Lorraine. It was on this assumption that the Germans and Austrians agreed to talk to Wilson on October 4 and 7 respectively, and on November 5 the Germans were offered an armistice by Wilson on the basis of the Fourteen Points (as extended), subject only to compensation for war damage and a reserved British interpretation of the meaning of `freedom of the Seas.' The Germans accepted, and the Armistice followed on November 11. What the Central Powers did not know was that on October 29 Colonel House had had a long secret meeting with the French and British leaders, Georges Clemenceau and David Lloyd George, at which they voiced their reservations about the Wilsonian code and had them accepted. These qualifications were drawn up by House in the form of a `Commentary,' cabled to Wilson and approved by him. The `Commentary' made all the difference. It effectively removed all the advantages to the Central Powers which the Fourteen Points seemed to offer and foreshadowed all the features of the subsequent Versailles Treaty to which they took the strongest objection—the dismemberment of Austro—Hungary, the loss of Germany's colonies, the break—up of Prussia by a `Polish Corridor' to the sea, and the handing over to a `big' Poland of the German industrial region of Silesia. Moreover, 'compensation' had become `reparations' on an enormous scale, and the implication of all the terms was that Germany and Austria were atoning for their 'war—guilt.' German war—guilt, it might be argued, was implicit in the Fourteen Points, but the system of `rewards' for the victors and `punishments' for the vanquished which the `Commentary' provided for had been specifically repudiated by Wilson in his twenty—threepoint code.

The truth is, from the moment the United States entered the war, Wilson had been on a dramatic learning—curve in international affairs, and his views were changing all the time. There is nothing like war to shatter utopian illusions, turn idealism into *realpolitik*, and transform goodwill into bitterness. The huge American casualties incurred in September 1918 had left their mark on the Commander—in—Chief in the White House, and Wilson's growing anti—German feelings had been stiffened by his first experiences of negotiating with them from October onwards. He was particularly disgusted that on October 12, more than a week after the Germans asked him for an armistice, they sank the Irish civilian ferry *Leinster*, drowning 450 people, including many women and children. In addition, Wilson's preoccupations were shifting. He had originally accepted the British idea for a permanent international forum, or League of Nations, without enthusiasm. But the more he thought about it, the more it appealed to him. Indeed, he became obsessed with turning it into reality, as the formula for an eventual system of world democratic government, with America at its head. This had two consequences, both unfortunate. First, he persuaded himself that he ought to go to Europe in person, to act as midwife to this new child of reason and prince of peace. This meant that, instead of remaining in Washington as an Olympian deity remote from the wrangling at Versailles, to appear as a *deus ex machina* to impose judgment when the impasse was reached, he joined in the jostling just like any other head of government. And, as John Maynard Keynes, an acute observer at the conference, noted, Wilson was less impressive at close quarters. The Europeans were used to seeing him standing, speaking majestically from a podium. With his big head, he looked a bit odd seated at a conference table.

Second, Wilson was advised by his Secretary of State, Robert Lansing (1864—1928), a legal expert, that if the proposal for a League were inserted into the preliminary negotiating document, as Wilson wished, it would still constitute a treaty, under the US Constitution, and would have to be ratified by Congress. Hence Wilson decided to go for a final treaty straight away. That meant the Germans, who had already been deceived over the underlying principles of the peace, were not allowed to take part in the negotiating process, which was carried out solely among the Allies. They were simply handed a *fait accompli*, and asked to sign it—or resume the war. Since the Allies were now occupying strategic parts of German territory, fighting was out of the question. So the Germans signed. But this `Carthaginian Peace,' as Keynes called it, which the Germans saw as a swindle as well as an outrageous injustice and an affront to their national dignity, determined them to seek rectification and revenge when opportunity offered, and a leader arose to seize it. Thus Versailles was the impulse behind Adolf Hitler's rise to power, the pretext for his aggressions, and the ultimate cause of World War Two.

It should be added that the American delegation was divided over the treaty. John Foster Dulles (1888—1959), a future secretary of state, thought it just on balance, bearing in mind the `enormity of the crimes committed by Germany.' Colonel House was behind Wilson's scrapping of his own points. Wilson's chief advisor on eastern Europe, Robert H. Lord, was a leading advocate of a `big' Poland, to Germany the worst single aspect of the treaty. But Lansing rightly recognized that the failure to allow the Germans to negotiate was a cardinal error and he considered Wilson had betrayed his principles in form and substance. His criticisms were a prime reason for Wilson's brutal dismissal of him early in 1920. The younger Americans were particularly bitter. William Bullitt, a future ambassador to France and Russia, wrote Wilson a fierce letter: `I am sorry that you did not fight our fight to the finish and that you had so little faith in the millions of men, like myself, in every nation, who had faith in you ... Our government has consented now to deliver the suffering peoples of the world to new oppressions, subjections

and dismemberments—a new century of war.' Other young men on the team, the historian Samuel Eliot Morison, the future Secretary of State Christian Herter, and Adolph Berle, later Assistant Secretary of State, also parted company with Wilson, and Walter Lippmann, already a heavyweight pundit, wrote: `In my view, the Treaty is not only illiberal and in bad faith, it is in the highest degree imprudent.' It is only fair to add that most of Wilson's distinguished team stood by him and defended him and the treaty then and later. From the perspective of three—quarters of a century, it does not seem Carthaginian. But, so far as Germany was concerned, it was certainly provocative and, since Germany retained the strongest economy in Europe, that was bound to cause trouble. German anger might not have been so significant if the League, with the United States as its head, had come into being as planned, to defend the settlement, if needs be by force. But, as a result of Wilson's further errors, American never joined it, and it was from the start `a covenant without a sword.'

The covenant was also ambiguous, bearing the hallmarks of Wilson's increasingly cloudy rhetoric. It was not the kind of international document the United States had ever signed before. It did not codify the law of nations or arrange for peace to be preserved by a system of mediation or arbitration. Wilson himself said that the `heart of the covenant' was Article X, which asked League members to `respect and preserve' the territories of all the nations which belonged to it. What exactly did that mean? Wilson compounded the ambiguity by insisting that the covenant was not a legal document but a moral oneand therefore all the more binding on its signatories. There is a historical myth that the European powers wanted the League at all costs, that Wilson tried to give it to them, and that an isolationist Congress refused to ratify it, thus bearing the long—term responsibility for another world war. There is no truth at all in this version. Clemenceau and Foch wanted a mutual security alliance, with its own planning staff, of the kind which had finally evolved at Allied HQ, after infinite pains and delays, in the final months of the war. In short they wanted something like the body which eventually appeared in 1948—9, in the shape of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and which has successfully kept the peace for the last half—century and survives to this day. They recognized that a universal system which involved all powers (including Germany) irrespective of their records, and which guaranteed all frontiers, irrespective of their merits, was nonsense. They knew there was small chance of Congress accepting any such monstrosity. Their aims were limited and they sought to involve America by stages, as earlier they had involved Britain, in mutual security arrangements. What they wanted America to accept, in the first place, was a guarantee of the treaty, rather than membership of any League.

That was approximately the position of Senator Henry Cabot Lodge (1850—1924), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He is usually presented as the villain of the piece. That is unfair. Lodge was not an isolationist. He was a Boston Brahmin, and Boston Brahmins had always been, and still are, internationalists. His great mentors were Henry Adams and Theodore Roosevelt, both of them outspoken internationalists, and all the evidence shows that he aimed for the kind of guarantee or League of which they would have approved. He thought that the covenant, though well meaning, was poorly drafted and too wide, and that members of the League would not in practice go to war to enforce the League's decisions since nations eschewed war except when their vital interests were at stake. How could frontiers be indefinitely guaranteed by anything or anybody? They reflected real and changing forces. Would the US go to war to protect Britain's frontiers in India or Japan's in Shantung? Of course not. And arrangements America made with Britain and France must be based upon the mutual accommodation of vital interests—then it would mean something. The American people, as

Lodge appreciated, were not opposed to US participation in the League. Polls taken at the time showed that Americans wanted to join a permanent peacekeeping body by ratios of four or five to one.

The Republican majority in the Senate favored a League of some kind. The true isolationists among the Republicans were not more than a dozen, and even some of those could have been won over. Lodge himself wanted the treaty to be ratified overwhelmingly. He wanted the League ratified too but not in its present form. Speaking with all the authority of a Harvard man who was the first ever to take a PhD there in political science, he said, `It might get by at Princeton but not at Harvard.' That was an unwise remark, a good example of the principle that making jokes in politics is nearly always costly. Wilson was incensed at this *lese—majeste*. He did not like Lodge anyway. Lodge was a decent, clever, and well—meaning man but he was irritating. He had, as someone put it, `a voice like the tearing of a sheet.' He put down `Fourteen Reservations' and said that unless these changes—or something like them—were made he would not ask his Senate friends to vote for it. But Wilson refused any changes, despite the fact that the Europeans would have accepted Lodge's reservations and in some cases welcomed them. Having said the covenant was a moral document, Wilson regarded it as scripture on a par with the Old Testament, not to be altered by human hand, and certainly not by senatorial hand. In his intransigence, w tison was isoiarea. iviany or rnose associarea wirn the peacekeeping process, like Colonel House and Herbert Hoover, favored the reservations; so did the Democratic leader, William Jennings Bryan. But Wilson determined to defy them all.

In November 1918, before the covenant was drawn up, Wilson had lost the mid—term elections, giving the Republicans control of Congress, including the Senate. The line—up there was twenty—three senators still controlled by Wilson and forty—nine by Lodge; the two groups together were quite enough to insure passage of the treaty and ratification of the League, given a bit of flexibility on Wilson's part. But he was rigid. He thought he would take the issue to the people. That was suicidal, given his growing state of ill—health. In April 1919 he suffered his first stroke, in Paris. It was concealed. In September, back in America, he began a speaking tour, to boost support for the League and bring pressure on the `Strong Reservationists,' as Lodge's supporters were called. He traveled 8,000 miles by rail in three weeks, speaking constantly. This culminated in a second stroke in the train on September 25. Again there was a cover—up. On October 10 there was a third and incapacitating attack which left his entire left side paralyzed. His physician, Gary Grayson—recently promoted admiral—admitted later: `He is permanently ill physically, is gradually weakening mentally, and can't recover.' But Grayson refused to declare the President incompetent.

The Vice—President, Thomas Marshall (1854—1925), a former governor of Indiana but a hopelessly insecure man, best known for his remark `What this country needs is a good five—cent cigar,' declined to challenge the President's inability to perform his duties, especially since this meant challenging the second Mrs Wilson, who guarded the President's sick quarters like a Valkyrie. In practice, Grayson, Tumulty, and Edith Wilson conspired to make her the President, which she remained for eighteen months. Rumors circulated that Wilson was stricken with tertiary syphilis, a raving prisoner in a barred room. Mrs Wilson, who had spent only two years at school, wrote orders in a large, childish hand, `The President says ... ,' sacked and appointed Cabinet ministers, and forged the President's signature on Bills. She, as much as Wilson, was responsible for Lansing's departure ('I hate Lansing,' she said) and his replacement by a completely inexperienced lawyer, Bainbridge Colby (1869—1950), who was running the Shipping Board. Senator Albert Fall, who had publicly complained, `We have petticoat

government! Mrs Wilson is president!' was summoned to the White House to `see for himself.' He found Wilson with a long, white beard but otherwise apparently alert (he could concentrate for five to ten minutes at a time). When Fall said, `We, Mr President, have all been praying for you,' Wilson foxily replied, `Which way, Senator?'—a remark interpreted as evidence of his continuing sharpness. Fall was with Wilson only a short time, and being an egoist did most of the talking. So Wilson `passed muster' and the farce continued.

Thus the great Wilson presidency ended in deception and failure. Wilson's twenty—three supporters, under strict instructions from the paralyzed titan, voted against the League rather than accept the Lodge reservations. The Reservationists voted against it as it stood. The treaty failed in a vote on November 19, 1919 and again, with two more votes, on March 19, 1920. Amazing as it may seem, Wilson hoped at one point to be nominated again and run for a third term. Frustrated in this, he let it be known that he considered the 1920 election to be `a referendum on the League of Nations.' That compounded his earlier errors, for it suggested to the outside world that the result was a popular endorsement of the Senate's rejection of the Wilson covenant. It was nothing of the sort—the League was hardly an issue at all. The Democrats nominated James M. Cox, governor of Ohio (1870—1957), with Franklin Roosevelt as his running mate. They did not try very hard, and they certainly failed, to make foreign policy seem important. The Republicans nominated an old—fashioned conservative, Warren Harding (1865—1923), an Ohio senator, who was certainly against the Wilson League but was not an isolationist either. If the American people preferred him, it was because he was so tremendously unlike Wilson. He was the `old America' before the Wilson watershed. His theme was `Let us return to normalcy.'

Harding was from Ohio, then the American heartland and certainly the Republican center of gravity, which had produced six out of ten presidents since 11865. He had risen from poverty to create a successful small—town paper, the *Marion Star*, and had then become director of a bank, a lumber company, a phone company, and a building society. He was decent, small—town America in person: handsome, genial, friendly to all but quite dignified enough to carry off the presidential role. He thought America was the most wonderful country in the world, in history indeed, and all he wished was to keep it like that. To get elected, he stuck President McKinley's old flagpole in his garden and ran a 'front—porch campaign.' Many famous people made the pilgrimage to Marion to listen to him talk—Al Jolson, Lillian Gish, Ethel Barrymore, Pearl White among them, but also 600,000 ordinary folk too, many of them black—hence a Democratic rumor that Harding had negro blood. Everybody liked Harding. The worst thing about him was his sharpfaced wife, Flossie, known as the `Duchess,' of whom Harding said (not in her hearing), `Mrs Harding wants to be the drum—major in every band that passes.' Harding always answered his own front door in person and was not above continuing the practice at the White House. Like many Americans still, he always took a horse—ride on Sunday after church. In May 1920 he told a cheering crowd in Boston: `America's present need is not heroics but healing, not nostrums but normalcy, not revolution but restoration ... not surgery but serenity.' The Americans liked this. They gave Harding the biggest plurality ever: 16,152,200 to 9,147,353, with an electoral college majority of 404 to 127. Debs, though in prison under Wilson's ferocious wartime legislation, got his 900,000 votes—but then he had them before. Apart from the South, `solid' for historical reasons, Harding was everyone's choice, all over America, and `normalcy' was his policy.

What was normalcy? America had moved on since Wilson began his revolution, faster than ever, and the war had accelerated the pace in countless different ways. For one thing, it brought

women directly into the industrial workforce over virtually the whole range of occupations. In 1880 there were only 2.6 million employed women in the United States, overwhelmingly in domestic service, teaching, and nursing. Women had been fully qualified doctors since the 1850s, thanks to the pioneering of Elizabeth Blackwell (1821—1910), an Englishwoman who was the first woman in America to receive a medical degree, conferred on her by Geneva Medical College, New York. She and her sister, Dr Emily Blackwell, founded the New York Infirmary for Women and Children (1854), where they gave clinical experience for women aspiring to be doctors who had already graduated from the new schools which trained women: the Female Medical School of Philadelphia (1850) and the Boston Medical School for Women (1852). Rather more slowly, women entered the law; in 1870 the Chicago Union College of Law conferred the first legal degree on a woman. By 1890 there were 4 million employed women, rising to 5.1 million in 1900 and 7.8 million in 1910, and by this date educational facilities for women were available in all the arts and sciences.

Political progress was not so fast. Whereas virtually all women, at least in theory, supported vocational training for women, surprisingly few 19th—century American women were prepared to agitate for the vote. They were much more enthusiastic members of temperance and abolitionist movements, and these were the two main channels through which women entered politics, albeit on single—issue platforms. As we have seen, women had had the vote in New York, 1776—1807, but had lost it. On July 19, 1848, inspired by the revolutionary ferment in Europe during the `Year of Revolutions,' a gathering of women met at Seneca Falls, in New York, under the leadership of Lucretia Coffin Mott (1793—1880) and Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815—1902). Mott was a Quaker preacher and abolitionist, Stanton an abolitionist and a temperance preacher. The women present enthusiastically endorsed equal rights in marriage, education, religion, and employment but passed a resolution calling for the vote only by a small majority. However, Stanton recruited to the movement Susan Brownell Anthony (1820—1906), who became the most effective organizer of the first great wave of `votes for women' campaigning. To do this, Anthony and Stanton broke with the anti—slavery movement, and men, and founded the radical, New York—based National Women's Suffrage Association, denouncing the Fifteenth Amendment because it enfranchised only black men. They accepted only women as members and insisted the votes—for—women issue be kept separate from all the other progressive causes. The rival, Boston—based American Woman Suffrage Association accepted the Fifteenth Amendment as a step in the right direction and welcomed male members.

The two organizations fought each other bitterly for two decades. Anthony tried another tack in the 1870s when she hired lawyers to argue that the Fourteenth Amendment required states to let women vote, but on March 29, 1875, in *Minor v. Happersett* the Supreme Court rejected the argument and ruled that `the Constitution does not confer the right of suffrage on anyone.' The NWSA campaigned for a federal vote, but got nowhere. The AWSA tried campaigning state by state but lost all the referenda they sponsored. However, in Wyoming Territory, women got the vote in 1869, followed by Utah Territory (1870), Washington Territory (1883), Colorado (1893), and Idaho (1896). In 1890 the two organizations finally healed the breach and amalgamated, Anthony taking over the leaderships.

Even so, it took another entire generation before American women got the vote, and in the end they were two years behind their British sisters. This is remarkable in view of the ease with which American white males got the vote in the late 18th or early 19th centuries, and in view of the fact that American women who appeared in Britain from the 1820s onwards were variously noted for being 'independent,' uppity,' `self—sufficient,' and `strong—minded.' British visitors

to the United States brought back exactly the same impression. If American women had exerted their strength, they would have secured votes by the mid—19th century. The historian is driven to the conclusion that, for the great majority of American women, voting came low in their order of priorities. American wives in particular preferred to exert evident and satisfying control over their husbands to the infinitesimal chance of determining the selection of a president. Alice James, youngest of the James children and the only girl in a family of brilliant men, complained of male `cruelty' and `oppression.' She hotly denied the equality of the sexes when, as she said, it was clear that women enjoyed `moral superiority.' In practice, she thought, men could be comfortably enslaved by the exercise of feminine intelligence.,' Edith Wharton, the ablest woman of her generation, equally steered clear of the suffrage movement, believing women were made, as she said, `for pleasure and procreation' and, skillful by use of these characteristics, would get what they wanted.„ Moreover, among the minority who did actively seek the vote, sectarianism was rife, as indeed it was in all the radical movements.

The splits of the 1870s and 1880s were followed by further divisions after the turn of the century, when the militant National Women's Party, run by Alice Paul (1885—1977), imitating the British suffragettes, ran hunger strikes and picketed the White House. In July 1917 a large body of them made a determined attempt to storm the White House and a score were seized by the police and transported to the district workhouse. President Wilson, who had now come round to their viewpoint and was shortly to throw his whole weight behind a constitutional amendment, was furious with the women for their needless violence, but still more furious with the police for their overreaction (as he saw it). He issued immediate pardons—whereupon the women, who were even more furious, refused to be pardoned. The Attorney—General advised that a presidential pardon was inoperative unless freely accepted. Eventually the women changed their minds.„ But the incident helps to explain why the women's suffrage movement was ineffective at persuading opponents, riot least among their own sex.

What tipped the balance was unquestionably the same factor which won the battle in Britain—the energy, resourcefulness, and devotion of wartime women workers in occupations hitherto carried out exclusively by men, especially in factories. By the time the women tried to storm the White House, full suffrage had been conceded in fifteen states and partial rights in another thirteen. Both the Democratic and the Republican Parties had endorsed women's suffrage in 1916 and in January 1918 Wilson made it official administration policy. Congress, despite vicious lobbying by both the liquor and the textile trades, which for different reasons were scared of the impact of women voters, passed the legislation by June 4, 1919, when the Nineteenth Amendment was submitted to the states. Section One read: `The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of sex.' Section Two added: `The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.' Ratified, and proclaimed on August 26, 1920, it allowed women the vote just in time to give Harding his landslide.

Many intelligent and experienced women believed all along that suffrage was not the key issue and that the women's rights issue was very much broader. They had to secure, for instance, equality of pay and equality of opportunity in job selection and promotion, and over a whole range of other matters. That involved another constitutional amendment, and the agitation to secure an Equal Rights Amendment began in 1923. It took half a century, with regular legislative submissions in each Congress, before the ERA was passed on March 22, 1972. But it failed to be ratified despite a three—year extension of the deadline. By July 30, 1982 only thirty—five of the thirty—eight states needed had ratified, and five of them had rescinded their vote. It is only fair

to add that, in the meantime, the Equal Pay Act of June 11, 1963 had forbidden sex discrimination in employment by requiring equal pay and benefits for men and women at the same skill level. This was reinforced by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of July 2, 1964, which has been the basis for most subsequent litigation to secure equality of treatment for women.

It is convenient to pursue this story of women's constitutional entitlements now rather than later. A Woman's Rights Project was set up by the American Civil Liberties Union which, from 1972 to 1980, was directed by an exceptionally able lawyer, Ruth Bader Ginsberg, later a Supreme Court Justice. Though she passed out top of her class at both Harvard and Columbia law schools, she was turned down for a Supreme Court clerkship, a celebrated high—road to legal distinction, by no less than Felix Frankfurter (1882—1965), a founding member of the American Civil Liberties Union, who said that—personally—he was not ready to take a woman onto his staff. No law firm offered her a position either. From this experience Ginsberg formed the view that the best way to solve the `woman problem' was to treat women exactly the same as men, sex rarely being a genuine consideration in practice. The US Constitution is (on the whole) well suited to sustain this philosophy. Ginsburg used the `equal protection of the law' provision to challenge ;ex distinction over military benefits, disability programs, parental sup4port obligations, administration of wills and estates, and other matters Where gender—based practices were unfair to women. She also litigated on behalf of women in areas where `real' sex distinctions were involved, rather than irrational distinctions based on sex, such as beneit plans which covered all common disabilities except pregnancy. In three important cases (*Geduldig v. Aiello, General Electric v. Gilbert,* and the so—called *CalFed* case) she lost, the Supreme Court ruling that the distinctions were based not on gender but on the difference between `pregnant women and non—pregnant persons.' Congress responded by passing the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (1978), which required that pregnant workers be treated the same as others. *CalFed* stirred up feminist sectarianism again, revealing sharp differences between militants who wanted the sexes treated equally and others who argued that workplaces were designed around the needs of men and that `special treatment' was necessary in law to produce equality. This breach led to the development of `difference feminism' and `sameness feminism,' two antagonistic varieties which exactly recalled the sectarianism of the 1880s, and for the same reason. We need not follow the rival arguments into the trackless recesses of feminist jurisprudence, especially after the issue was complicated by the intrusion of militant lesbians, militant black women, and indeed militant black lesbians. Battle raged over complex litigation involving the distribution and sale of pornography, made unlawful by local ordinances (known as the `Minneapolis Ordinance' in legal shorthand), the argument being that such laws, and others, presented the `ordinary' or `essential' woman as white, heterosexual, and professional middle class. The short point to be grasped was that giving women the vote in 1920 did not in itself make much difference to the lives of women: it merely opened a new phase in the quest for justice and equality before the law.

The same principle applied to blacks, though there were fundamental differences too. The end of World War One, in which blacks had fought in large numbers, often with courage and distinction, and sustained heavy losses, drew attention to the fact that the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments (1868—70), constitutionally designed to give blacks, or at any rate black males, legal equality, had not succeeded in doing so though an entire generation had passed since their adoption. In the South blacks had actually lost ground, as a result both of unlawful activities by the white majority and of legal decisions. In 1876, in *United States v. Reece*, the Supreme Court ruled that, while the Fifteenth Amendment forbade states to disenfranchise blacks for

reasons of race, it left the states with discretionary powers to exclude certain categories of persons for reasons unconnected with race. This enabled Southern states to reduce the number of black voters by literacy tests and poll taxes, whites being exempted from the effects of tests by the so—called Grandfather Clause. This process of exclusion took place in Mississippi (1890), South Carolina (1895), Louisiana (1898), North Carolina (1900), Alabama (1901), Virginia (1902), Georgia (1908), and Oklahoma (1910), while poll taxes eliminated most blacks from voting rolls in Texas, Florida, Tennessee, and Arkansas. A system of `White Primaries' excluded blacks from voting in Democratic primaries and conventions, which in practice denied them any influence in the South. Despite much litigation before the Supreme Court, the practice was not finally found unconstitutional till *Smith v. Allwright* (1944) and *Terry v. Adams* (1953). This system of political exclusion was reinforced by terror. From 1882 to 1903, a total of 1,985 blacks were killed by Southern lynch mobs, most being hanged, some burned alive, and for a variety of offenses, real or imaginary. Then there was the Ku Klux Klan. The original Klan was employed to intimidate the Radical Republicans (both black and white) of the South in the Reconstruction Era, and virtually disbanded when the Southern whites regained their ascendancy and drove blacks off the voting rolls. But a second Ku Klux Klan was founded at Atlanta in 1915 and spread during the 1920s to become virtually a national organization. It was actually strongest outside the South, especially in Indiana, and it made itself felt in states like Oregon and Colorado. The Second Klan had many targets: Catholics, Jews, white ne'er—do—wells, and Protestants of Anglo—Saxon origin who indulged in immoral practices, as well as blacks. In effect, it was the enforcement arm of middle—class morality in the Bible Belt. Blacks went in fear of it even when they were not directly threatened by its custom of whipping, torturing, or even murdering its enemies.

Conditions in the South after the restoration of white supremacy detonated one of the greatest internal migrations in American history. The underlying cause was economic: the South had little to offer liberated blacks who wanted to get on and improve their living standards. The first popular movement of blacks out of the South came in the years 1877—81, the so—called Exoduster Movement, when up to 70,000 blacks were encouraged by promoters like Benjamin ('Pap') Singleton to move into the `Promised Land' of Kansas. This exodus ended in disillusion and heartbreak, but it did not stop the wider movement north and west. In 1880 only 12.9 percent of blacks lived in cities, and a majority of blacks continued to live in rural areas until about 1950. But blacks, once they tried urban life, found on the whole that they liked it. Or perhaps one should say that they preferred urban poverty to rural poverty—there was more to do and better chances. The Great Migration of blacks to the North and the cities began in the 1890s and reached a climax in World War One when well—paid wartime emergency jobs drew 500,000 blacks from Southern rural areas to the big cities. New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and St Louis were particular targets. In Chicago, for instance, the black population rose from 44,000 in 1910 to 110,000 in 1920. This migration lasted over sixty years and was huge in cumulative scale. From 1916 until the end of the 196os over 6 million blacks made the move. Thereafter the flow reversed itself, as the New South offered more jobs and opportunities than the smokestack industries of the North.

The World War One climax was significant in several respects. The war meant a sharp cut in European migration to the US, which in 1914 had totaled over 1.2 million people. By 1918 it was running at the rate of 100,000 a year. The wartime industrial boom meant scores of thousands of well—paid jobs for blacks, and for the first time the North needed them more than they needed the North. But their sudden, multitudinous arrival caused agonizing social, housing, and cultural

problems, and the result was race—riots on a scale never before seen in America. These were mainly white riots against blacks encroaching on whites—only housing districts. In East St Louis in 1917, white rioters killed thirty—nine blacks. There was a similar riot in East Chicago, followed by two years of sporadic residential violence in which twentyseven black dwellings were bombed. This culminated in a devastating five—day race war in 1919, when black mobs retaliated against white mobs, twenty—three blacks and fifteen whites were killed, and federal troops were summoned to restore order. Similar, though smaller—scale, riots occurred in twenty other cities in 1919. The Chicago Commission on Race Relations carried out an exhaustive inquiry into this episode, and its report is a model of the kind. The whites were mainly armed with bricks and blunt sticks and often fought only with their fists. Use of handguns and rifles was rare. On the whole blacks had more guns than whites, and knives as well. These were essentially race riots over territory. But after 1919 it became rare for whites to riot against blacks. By 1943, indeed, the rioting initiative had passed to blacks. That year there were serious riots in both Detroit and Harlem, New York. But whereas the Detroit riot was radical and territorial, with blacks now taking the offensive, in Harlem it was a new type of disturbance, termed `community rioting,' which started not at the periphery of black settlement but in its heart, and was essentially an outburst against property, especially shops, whose object was looting. This was a new pattern of black violence, enacted on a much greater scale in Harlem and Brooklyn in 1964, in Watts, Los Angeles in 1965, and in Newark and Detroit in 1967. These in turn detonated the riots in many cities during the `Long Hot Summer' of 1968. The urban whites had taught the blacks how to riot, and the blacks learned the lesson with a vengeance.

The main reason why white rioting declined after 1919 was that blacks in the big cities settled down into ghettos and the boundaries between white and black areas became well defined. Most of these ghettos came into significant existence between 1940 and 1970, when 4 million blacks left the rural South for the urban North. But some ghettos were older. The creation of black New York's Harlem, the most famous or notorious ghetto of all, was a human and artistic tragedy of peculiar poignancy. Until about 1910, Harlem, originally a Dutch village, was essentially a salubrious white area occupied by people of British, Irish, German, and Jewish origin. It had a small—town atmosphere with big city facilities—good restaurants and shops and theaters. In the booming 1880s and 1890s, it was provided with wonderful brownstone houses, especially Striver's Row on 139th Street, designed by the leading architect Stanford White in 1891. The white `loss' of Harlem began in 1904 during an ill—planned housing boom detonated by the opening of the Lenox Avenue subway. It was intended to accommodate well—to—do whites but they did not turn up. Instead this excess housing attracted the first black realty speculator, Philip A. Payton Jr, founder of the Afro—American Realty Company. He was a disciple of Booker T. Washington and of his doctrine `Get some property—get a home of your own.' He helped middle—class black families to move into the area, down to 110th Street. It was the highest—quality accommodation blacks had ever lived in. Payton has been called the first exponent of `black economic nationalism' who `knew how to turn prejudice into dollars and cents. He called his apartment buildings after famous black figures—one, for instance, was named after the 18th century black poetess, Phyllis W. Wheatley. He was accused of fraud and lost his company in 1908, but by his death in 1917 he had housed more blacks in quality housing than anyone, before or since.

The whites fought back, of course. Under the leadership of John G. Taylor of the Harlem Property Owners' Improvement Corporation, local whites campaigned under the slogan `Drive them out and back to the slums where they belong.' Taylor urged that blacks should be forced to

`colony' on empty land outside New York, rather like an Indian reservation, and in the meantime he urged the erection of 2.4 foot—high fences to `protect' white areas. But white landlords saw an opportunity to make a quick profit and sold houses to blacks at up to 75 percent above white rates. That provoked a sudden mass exodus of whites, `like a community in the middle ages fleeing before an epidemic of the black plague.'' In the 1920s, 118,792 whites left Harlem and 87,417 blacks arrived. Restaurants put up signs: `Just opened for coloreds.' Blacks had always lived in the neighborhood—there had been 1,100 families there in 1902—but the size of the black occupation, from 150th through 125th to 110th Street was the first big black territorial victory in a big city.

The victory turned sour when Harlem, from being first a white, then a black, middle—class settlement, degenerated into a slum, a process completed by the end of the 1920s. This was a result of sheer pressure of numbers. From 1910 to 1920 the black population of New York City increased from 91,709 to 152,467 (66 percent) and, from 1920 to 1930, to 327,706 (115 percent). The white population of Manhattan actually declined in the 1920s by 18 percent as its black population swelled by io6 percent. By 1930 blacks composed over 12 percent of Manhattan, though they were only 4.7 percent of the city as a whole. In Harlem, the area of densest black settlement, they were joined in the 1920s not only by 45,000 Puerto Ricans but, most significantly, by a huge influx of black immigrants from the West Indies. These mainly English—speaking but also Dutch—, French—, Spanish—, and Danish—speaking Caribbeans became notorious for their frugality, thrift, business enterprise, and success within the black community, and were denounced as `pushy,' `crafty,' `clannish,' and `the Jews of the race.' There was antagonism from native—born blacks, who sang the rhyme: `When a monkey—chaser dies / Don't need no undertaker / Just throw him in de Harlem River / He'll float back to Jamaica.'

About 40,000 of these immigrants settled in Manhattan, nearly all in Harlem, which thus became America's largest black melting—pot. In turn, Harlem swelled to bursting: by 1930 164,566 blacks, 72 percent of the total in Manhattan, lived in the Harlem ghetto. The pressure of numbers produced skyrocketing rents in 1920s Harlem, and that in turn led to over—occupancy and rapid deterioration of property. It was a 'slum—boom' and vast profits were made by both black and white landlords. Conditions were soon described as `deplorable,' 'unspeakable,' and `incredible.' Density was not as great as in the Jewish Lower East Side at the turn of the century but there was a difference: Jews, if they prospered at all, and most did, could escape, to Brooklyn and elsewhere. Blacks were trapped in Harlem: there was in practice nowhere else they were allowed to go. By 1925, Harlem had a population density of 336 to the acre in black districts, against a Manhattan average of 223 (and 111 in Philadelphia, the second most congested black city, and 67 in Chicago). Two streets in Harlem were perhaps the most crowded in the entire world at that time. The result was death—rates 42 percent higher than the city as a whole. Deaths in childbirth, infancy, and from tuberculosis were particularly high and other killers were venereal disease, pneumonia, heart disease, and cancer, all well in excess of New York City averages. Deaths from inter—black violence also increased, by 60 percent, 1900—25—the beginning of a new nightmare for a race which had too many already.

Harlem abounded in specialists who called themselves `herb doctors,' `African medicine men,' `spiritualists,' `dispensers of snake oils,' `Indian doctors,' 'faith—healers,' 'layers—on—of—hands,' `palmists,' and phrenologists. `Professor Ajapa' sold `herb juice' guaranteed `to cure consumption, rheumatism and other troubles that several doctors have failed in.' `Black Herman the Magician' and `Sister P. Herrald' sold `blessed handkerchiefs,' `potent powders,' love—

charms, amulets, and `piles of roots' which `keep your wife at home,' `make women fertile,' and `keep husbands appealing.' But there were also signs which read: `Jesus is the Doctor; Services on Sunday.' In 1926, an investigator found 14o black churches, mainly of the store—front variety, in one 150—block area of Harlem. W. E. B. Du Bois (1868—1963), the radical black civil rights leader, observed: `Harlem is perhaps overchurched.' Only fifty—four of these churches were `regular' church buildings but they included some of the most magnificent in New York City. Most of the clergy were self—ordained 'Jack—leg preachers' or 'cottonfield preachers' representing such affiliations as `The Church of the Temple of Love,' `The Church of Luxor,' `The Live—ever—Die—never Church,' and `The Sanctified Sons of the Holy Ghost.' As one black clergyman wrote, `People not only had their worries removed in such places but their meager wordly goods as well.' Home—grown medicine and home—grown religion were but two of the ways in which New York blacks, as in so many other big cities, soothed the pain of their existence.

Although blacks made themselves, by 1930, one of the major racial components of New York City, alongside the Irish, the Italians, the Jews, and the older founding—groups, they were not eligible, in practice, for the melting—pot system. The notion that the United States was a draconian machine into which millions of different ethnic, racial, religious, political, social, and cultural backgrounds were poured, transmogrified under its irresistible pressures, and emerged as Americans—neither more nor less—was as old as the republic itself; older indeed. Rhode Island in Roger Williams' day was already an example of the meltingpot in action. The term is believed to have been coined in 1782 by the naturalized New Yorker M. G. Jean de Crevecoeur, who wrote: `I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a Frenchwoman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. *He* is an American who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced ... Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men.' Some arrivals in America had their doubts about how well the ethnic metallurgy of the American Experience worked. Charles Dickens records that, in a railroad car in the Midwest, he apologized to a steward for misunderstanding something and said, `You see, I am a stranger here.' The steward replied, `Mister, in America we are all strangers.' But the melting—pot image appealed particularly to the millions from east Europe, the true `huddled masses,' who, in the generation after the 1880s, were able to put behind them not just the poverty but the bitter national, racial, and ethnic antagonisms of the Old World, and make themselves indistinguishable from other free citizens of a great and prosperous nation. Oddly enough, it was a Londoner, Israel Zangwill (1864—1926), son of a Russian—Jewish refugee, who brought the metaphor to vibrant life with a play, *The Melting—Pot*, which had a sen sational success on Broadway in 19o8. David Qixano, a symbolic character based on his father, exults in his escape to New York City: `America is God's crucible, the great Melting Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming! Here you stand, good folk, think I, when I see them at Ellis Island, here you stand in your fifty groups with your fifty languages and histories, and your fifty blood hatreds and rivalries, but you won't be long like that, brothers, for these are the fires of God you've come to ... A fig for your feuds and vendettas! German and Frenchman, Irishman and Englishman, Jews and Russians—into the Crucible with you all! God is making the American.' Zangwill added, more contentiously: `The real American has not yet arrived. He is only in the Crucible. I tell you—he will be the fusion of all the races, the coming superman.'

But to a great extent the Crucible was for `Europeans only' or `whites only.' It is true that on the rim of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean, countless Americans, whose forebears dated from the period when neither France nor Spain nor England nor America itself exercised effective sovereignty, and the adage `No Peace Beyond the Line' was the only law, were a racial mixture which defied analysis, so complex it was—and is. It is also true that many Northerners had some Indian blood, and boasted of it. The James family of Boston and both the Oyster Bay and the Long Island Roosevelts were cases in point. But most Americans were wedded to the idea that their birthright, though multinational and non—ethnic, was white. Some pushed the argument further. The Second Ku Klux Klan of 1915 was an attempt to reassert the integrity of the White Anglo—Saxon Protestant community and its dominance. The next year Madison Grant published his bestseller, *The Passing of the White Race*, a quasi—scientific presentation in an American context of European master—race theory. He argued that America, by unrestricted immigration, had already nearly `succeeded in destroying the privileges of birth; that is, the intellectual and moral advantages a man of good stock brings into the world with him.' The result of an unqualified melting—pot could be seen in Mexico, where `the absorption of the blood of the original Spanish conquerors by the native Indian population' had produced a degenerate mixture `now engaged in demonstrating its incapacity for self—government.' The virtues of the `higher races' were `highly unstable' and easily disappeared `when mixed with generalized or primitive characters.'

The concept of the Wasp implied a ruling caste, or rather a racial pecking—order, summed up by Will Hays, campaign—manager to Warren Harding, when he described his candidate's lineage as `the finest pioneer blood, Anglo—Saxon, German, Scotch—Irish and Dutch.' Senator Henry Cabot Lodge used the code—phrase `the English—speaking people. The war, as Wilson predicted, gave a huge impulse to patriotic xenophobia. But he nevertheless signed the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918. The latter punished expressions of opinion which, irrespective of their likely consequences, were `disloyal, profane, scurrilous or abusive' of the American form of government, flag, or uniform; and under it Americans were prosecuted for criticizing the Red Cross, the YMCA, and even the budget. Justice Brandeis and his colleague Oliver Wendell Holmes (1841—1935) sought to resist this wave of intolerance. In *Schenk v. United States* (1919), Holmes laid down that restraint on free speech was lawful only when the words were of a nature to create `a clear and present danger;' he dissented from *Abrams v. United States*, when the Supreme Court upheld a sedition conviction, and argued that `the best test of truth is the power of thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market,' which echoed Milton's point in *Areopagitica*. But these were lonely voices. Patriotic organizations like the National Security League and the National Civic Federation continued their activities into the peace, and the watchword in 1919 was `Americanization.'

There were two immediate consequences. From the autumn of 1919, with Wilson stricken, there was really no effective government in Washington, and the man in charge, insofar as anyone was, Mitchell Palmer, the Attorney—General (1872—1936), was a xenophobe. He had made foes as Enemy Property Controller during the war and in spring 1919 he was nearly killed when an anarchist's bomb exploded in front of his house. Thereafter he led a nationwide drive against 'foreign—born subversives and agitators.' On November 4 he presented Congress with a report entitled `How the Department of justice discovered upwards of 60,000 of these organized agitators of the Trotsky doctrine in the US ... confidential information upon which the government is now sweeping the nation clean of such alien filth.' `The sharp tongues of the Revolution's head,' he wrote, `were licking the altars of the churches, leaping into the belfry of

the school bell, crawling into the sacred corners of American homes' and `seeking to replace marriage vows with libertine laws.' On New Year's Day 1920 his justice Department rounded up 6,000 aliens, most of whom were expelled. In the `Red Scare' that followed, five members of the New York State Assembly were disqualified and a Congressman was twice thrown out of the House.

Two Italians, Nicolo Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, anarchists who had evaded military service, were sentenced to death on July 14, 1921 for the murder, in the course of a payroll raid, of a clerk and a guard at a South Braintree, Massachusetts shoe factory. The evidence was largely circumstantial and the jury may have been prejudiced. On the other hand, the Massachusetts governor of the time, Alvin Fuller, set up a special committee which examined the trial record and pronounced the verdict just, and all the various appeal courts through which the case passed (the men were not executed till August 1927) likewise decided they were guilty. But the organized left decided to make the case a *cause celebre*, pulling out all the literary stops both in America and in Europe and involving, among others, H. G. Wells, Anatole France, and Henri Barbusse, as well as John Dewey, Walter Lippmann, H. L. Mencken, John Dos Passos, and Katherine Anne Porter. From 1925 the worldwide agitation was directed by Willi Muenzenberg's official Communist International propaganda machine in Paris, and produced spectacular results. When the men were finally executed, there were riots in Pars, Geneva, Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg, and Stuttgart. Artistic memorials included a `crucifixion' mosaic by Ben Shahn, a notorious play, *Winterset*, by Maxwell Anderson, and a twovolume novel, *Boston*, by Upton Sinclair, who privately admitted that his researches while preparing the book left him in no doubt that the men had committed the murders. The left profited enormously from the case, as they were later to do over the Rosenbergs and Alger Hiss. It laid the first of what were to be many archeological layers of antiAmericanism in the world, and destroyed the faith of many innocent people in the American Dream.

The Red Scare as a whole was counter—productive, as the new President, Harding, was shrewd enough to recognize. Against the advice of his Cabinet and his wife, he insisted on releasing Eugene Debs. He thought Debs was a greater danger to the American people as an imprisoned symbol than as a militant at liberty. He said, `I want him to eat his Christmas dinner with his wife,' and let him out. He freed twenty—three other prisoners convicted of political offenses the same day, and he commuted death sentences on the 'Wobblies' (Industrial Workers of the World). Long before his death he had virtually cleared the jails of anti—constitutional offenders. But he could do nothing about the other consequence of wartime xenophobia, restrictions on immigration, because this sprang from deep—rooted feelings among many ordinary Americans that the `open door' policy was no longer tenable. The result was the Emergency Quota Act of 1921, first passed in 1920, pocket—vetoed by Wilson, reenacted and reluctantly signed by Harding.

It capped immigration from Europe at 357,000 a year, though it set no limits on Canada or Latin America. This was the first statutory ceiling on immigration. It also created the first quota system by restricting entrants from any country to 3 percent of persons born there as counted by the 1910 census. In 1924 the National Origins or Johnson—Reed Act cut the total in any one year to 164,000, with a final ceiling of 150,000 in 1927, capped entry from any one country to 2 percent, banned all Asians, under the provisions of the old Naturalization Act of 1790, and favoured northern and western Europeans at the expense of the Slavs and the Mediterranean nations. There was a further twist of the screw in 1929. As a result, European immigration to the

US fell from 2,477,853 in the 1920s to 348,289 in the 1930s, and total immigration from 4,107,200 to 528,400. The era of unrestricted mass immigration was over.

If America was now trying to pull up the drawbridge, through which the outside world had hitherto entered freely, what kind of people and culture were now the tenants of the castle? The debate about the soul of America had begun. While Mitchell Palmer was hunting Reds, East Coast highbrows—the term was a useful invention of the critic Van Wyck Brooks in 1915—were reading *The Education of Henry Adams*, the posthumous autobiography of the archetypal Boston mandarin, published in October 1918. From then until spring 1920 it was the most popular non—fiction book in America, rejecting the notion of a brazen, uniform national culture, of `Americanization,' of the matrix Palmer was trying to impose, and favoring instead what Adams called `multiversity.' Van Wyck Brooks, in a famous essay `Towards a National Culture,' which he had published in 1917 in his magazine *Seven Arts*, argued that the melting—pot theory was unsound since it turned immigrants into imitation Anglo—Saxons. He argued that Americans ought to aspire to a superior version of European nationalism but should pursue the `more adventurous ideal' of cosmopolitanism and become `the first international nation.' But one suspects that what Brooks really meant by this was a culture monitored and invigilated by the East Coast elites from Ivy League colleges. In May 1919, hearing that a friend, Waldo Frank, planned to settle in the Middle West, he wrote to him: `All our will—to—live as writers comes to us, or rather stays with us, through our intercourse with Europe. Never believe people who talk to you about the West, Waldo; never forget that it is we New Yorkers and New Englanders who have the monopoly of whatever oxygen there is in the American continent.'

This view, seen here in its most arrogant and extreme form, is worth quoting since it is still held, though not always openly expressed, by a large section of the American educated class. But it was challenged at the time by one of the leading gurus of the New England intelligentsia, the educationist John Dewey (1859—1952). He was speaking on behalf of the old silver—crusader and Midwestern spokesman William Jennings Bryan, who after vainly opposing the drift of the US into World War One (he resigned as secretary of state in protest) was fighting a last battle on behalf of American religious fundamentalism. When Tennessee enacted a law forbidding teachers in public schools to instruct children in Darwinian evolution, the American Civil Liberties Union financed a test—case involving John D. Scopes of Dayton. He was defended by an expensive specialist in sensational cases, Clarence Darrow (1857—1938) who among his other triumphs saved the murderers Leopold and Loeb from the death—chamber. Bryan, who was a dying man at the time, helped to prosecute Scopes. Thanks to some raucous and tendentious reporting by East Coast scribes, notably H. L. Mencken (1880—1956)—of whom more later—the impression has been left that the trial was a defeat for Bryan and a disaster for the Bible Belt. In fact Scopes was convicted and was fined $100. Fundamentalism survived and flourished and Evolution v. Creationism is still a live issue in large parts of America at the end of the millennium. At the time, the vogue among the Eastern urban elite was to mock the obscurantism of the Midwest which the Scopes trial epitomized (or so it was said). Dewey pointed out that Bryan was in fact not an obscurantist but `a typical democratic figure.' He might be mediocre but `democracy by nature puts a premium on mediocrity.' And Bryan spoke for some of the best, and most essential, elements in American society:

> the church—going classes, those who have come under the influence of evangelical Christianity. These people form the backbone of philanthropic social interest, of social reform through political action, of pacifism, of popular education. They embody and express the spirit of kindly goodwill towards classes which are at an economic

> disadvantage and towards other nations, especially when the latter show any disposition towards a republican form of government. The Middle West, the prairie country, has been the center of active social philanthropy and political progressivism because it is the chief home of this folk ... believing in education and better opportunities for its own children ... it has been the element responsive to appeals for the square deal and more nearly equal opportunities for all ... It followed Lincoln in the abolition of slavery and it followed Roosevelt in his denunciation of `bad' corporations and aggregations of wealth ... It has been the middle in every sense of the word and of every movement.

This first encapsulation of what has come to be known as Middle America applied, as Americans increasingly came to realize, not just to the Midwest but to almost every part of the vast nation. The essential simple `goodness' of America, and of Americans, was to be found everywhere. `Realist' or `Naturalist' novelists like Theodore Dreiser (1871—1945) and Sinclair Lewis (1885—1951) did not quite catch its essence. Concerned with particular tragic—dramas and scandals and abuses, as in Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1900) and *An American Tragedy* (1925) or Lewis' *Main Street* (1920) and *Babbitt* (1922), they ignored the enormous satisfactions which countless millions of ordinary Americans drew from the nation they were continually making and remaking.

Some of the painters got much closer, not just to the truthful image of American everyday life, but to its spirit, which at its best had a noble beauty of its own. Thomas Eakins (1844—1916), the Philadelphia master whose extraordinary devotion to the exactitudes of his craft make his portraits, of the famous and the obscure, so penetrating, argued passionately that American painters of genre and popular life ought to look at America with the same exclusive concentration as Church and Bierstadt looked at its physical features. He deprecated the fact that outstanding artists like Whistler, Sargent, and Mary Cassatt (1845—1926), the ablest of the Impressionists, spent so much of their time in Europe that they identified with its impulses. `If America is to produce great painters,' he said in 1914, `and if young art students wish to assume a place in the history of the art of their country, their first desire should be to remain in America, to peer deep into the heart of American life.'

One who did so peer was Winslow Homer (1836—1910). It is shocking to record that, when he was a teenager in the 1850s, Boston, then supposedly the cultural capital of the United States, had no art school. He learned his trade—insofar as he was taught anything at all—as a lithographer. This did not prevent him becoming the most wide—ranging and one of the most accomplished of all American painters, beginning with on—the—spot action drawings of the Civil War fronts for *Harper's Weekly*, and continuing through series on social life in gardens, on beaches, and in the playing fields, walks in the backwoods, small—town, village, and country life, schoolchildren and teenagers, farming and fishing, the coast and the prairie and the forests, mountain lakes and rushing rivers, always with ordinary Americans going about their daily tasks and pleasures in front of the multifaceted natural background of their country. Homer's eye is accurate, objective, dispassionate, uncommenting, understanding. The original energetic, unsophisticated roughness of his technique, eventually evolving into miracles of virtuosity (especially in his watercolors), allowed him to develop a true national style in painting just as Walt Whitman did in poetry.

It was on the basis laid by Eakins and Homer that Norman Rockwell (1895—1978) provided a unique encapsulation of Middle American life. He began providing cover illustrations for the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1916, the year Eakins died, and for the next forty—seven years produced no fewer than 322 of these windows into the nation in its normalcy, crises and

exultation, comedy and tragedy, laughter and sadness. The procedures whereby Rockwell conceived and executed these paintings, on the basis of which the illustration was photoengraved, using sketches, photographs, live models, pencil, ink, gouache, watercolor, crayons, and oils, was extraordinarily complex and arduous, often involving hundreds of preparatory studies. Rockwell was, and indeed still is, described as an illustrator, but it is now possible to predict his emergence as an Old Master, like the Dutch genre painters, especially Jan Steen, or the English moralist William Hogarth. Rockwell painted chiefly from his home at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, where his studio is now a gallery of his work, which attracts vast numbers of visitors from all over the world. Virtually all the neighborhood sat as models at one time or another, and anyone who visits the locality can see the people who inhabit his artistic world actually going about their business in the streets, shops, and offices—though they are increasingly the children, grandchildren, and great—grandchildren of the originals. For inspired verisimilitude, infused with a singular note of geniality, there has been nothing quite like it in the Western artistic tradition. *A Country Editor, Blacksmith's Boy, Heel and Toe, The Ration Board, A Hospital Reception Room, Thanksgiving, The Cleaning Women at the Ballet, Scouts: a Guiding Hand, Mrs O'Leary and Her Cow, Lady Drivers, The Veteran*—and many others—give truthful glimpses into precisely the magnanimity of Middle America which John Dewey described.

Middle America contrived its own peculiar drama when, largely through its efforts, America embraced Prohibition. Hard liquor, especially rum and whiskey, were entwined with American history from the beginning. Rum was a vital element in the three—cornered or quadrilateral slave—trade. Whiskey was often the only currency of the backwoods, as the Whiskey Rebellion of the 1790s testified. Enormous quantities of spirits were drunk in the United States in the late 18th and still more in the 19th century, when people had more money. But before we look at this in detail it is important to grasp that the soft—drinks industry was also an American phenomenon. Carbonated water itself was not an American invention. Commercial manufacture of artificial seltzer water began in Germany in 1783; five years later Paul, Schweppe and Gossee founded a business to mass—produce it in Geneva, and a decade later Jacob Schweppe moved to Bristol in England and started his great international firm. By 1807, soda—water was being dispensed in draught and in bottles in many cities of the United States. It was listed in the US *Pharmacopoeia* of 1820 as a `medicated water' and flavored syrups had been added by 1830. The next year was the key one; a patent was issued for machinery to dispense fizzy drinks across the counter. This was the beginning of the soda—fountain, and it duplicated itself across the United States *pari passu* with commercial sellers of medical drugs—the drugstore soda—fountain was well established in America by the 1840s. By the late 1880s, America had no fewer than 1,377 soft—drinks bottling plants producing 17.4 million cases a year.

The driving force behind this national phenomenon was the hot and humid South, which specialized in producing delicious new soft drinks (as well as ingenious hard ones). Not surprisingly, then, it was Atlanta which gave birth to the industry's masterpiece. John Styth Pemberton was a fifty—five—year—old druggist of the old—fashioned sort, who knew everything about dispensing his own preparations—he produced Pemberton's Extract of Styllinger and Pemberton's Globe Flower Cough Syrup. But, as with many druggists, he became more gifted at producing drinks for the soda—fountain in his shop than remedies for his drugs—counter. Like almost all 19th—century druggists, he loathed alcohol and strove hard to produce the perfect soft drink, what he called `the ideal nerve tonic and stimulant' which was not an

intoxi cant. He produced first `the French Wine of Coca,' an extract from the coca leaf, and then experimented with juice from the cola nut, knowledge of which had been brought to the South by slaves from Africa. It took him a long time to eliminate the bitterness, but he eventually managed a combination of the two drinks which was sweet, but not too sweet, and (as he thought) both soothing and stimulating. Then came the name, and `thinking that the two Cs would look well in advertising,' he hit on Coca—Cola. It is now the second most widely recognized term in the world (the first is 'OK').

Pemberton made his concoction at exactly the right time, for the 1880s were the takeoff decade for proprietary soft drinks, when the number of cases sold rose by 175 percent. By 1905 Coke was advertised throughout America as `The Great National Temperance Drink.' It is astonishing, looking back on it, that Pemberton was the first to bring cola and coca together; but most great ideas are simple. Much fuss was and is made about the `secret formula,' and when in 1985 a bored Coca—Cola company tried to change it for the first time in ninetynine years, the hostile public reaction was devastating." But the formula was easily deducible by expert chemical analysis and anyway did not matter much, as was testified by Alfred Steele, who worked for Coke for ten years before becoming president of Pepsi—Cola in 1950. The war of temperance versus hard liquor was probably not the main factor in Coke's success. Case shipments rose from 113 million annually to 182 million during the Prohibition decade but then, despite Repeal, rose again to 322 million during the Depression decade. The truth is, the success of Coke lay in marketing, salesmanship, organizing skills, and a thousand other things which had not much to do with its actual composition or the morals and habits of those who drank it.

Pemberton sold out to Asa Griggs Candler in 1887, the year after he invented it, for a mere $283.29—the biggest steal since the Dutch bought Manhattan. Candler was a genius whose family had been devastated by the Civil War, which deprived him of a medical career but left him determined to make his mark on the nation's health. By the time he sold the company to a consortium of Atlanta banks, under Ernest Woodruff, in 1919 it was worth $25 million, the biggest business deal yet carried out in the South. Thereafter it was mainly a matter of salesmanship, driven by the idea that there was no such thing as an unsuitable outlet for Coke. Harrison Jones, director of sales, told the bottler in 1923 that forty types of outlet, ranging from bakers' shops to fire—engine houses, could be persuaded to sell coke and that the job of the sales—force was `to make it impossible for the consumer to escape Coca—Cola ... Gentlemen, there is no place within reach, by steps, elevator, ladder or derrick, where Coca—Cola can be sold, but what should be reached by a CC salesman, or that salesman should be fired.' He said: `Salesmen should keep calling unremittingly on their prospects ... No matter how many times you have talked to a dealer about Coke, there is always something new to say. Repetition convinces a man. A merchant buys so many different things that a persistent salesman wins an opening where a casual order—taker makes no impression.'

Coke had a quasi—religious approach and was determined to use all the devilish lures which tempted men into its rival, the demon drink. Its divisions into regions and districts were reminiscent of the *classis* system of 16th—century Calvinism—they have since been copied by all the main. soft—drinks firms—and there were many aspects of Calvinism in its approach. A recruit to Coke, went the message in the 1920s, better still a convert to Coke, was `born again.' It welcomed `miracles,' such as the Crown Cork and Seal Bottle—Cap, which had been knocking around since 1892 but was nothing until married to Coke. Between 1850 and 1900 dozens of devices had been patented in America for efficient sealing of soft—drink and beer bottles, but none had really worked. So the bottle—cap, like Coke itself, proved one of the greatest, and

simplest, inventions of history. Coke was probably the best single example of the way the American religious spirit was transmuted into a secular force while still keeping its religious overtones. Here is Jones again, to a convention of bottlers: `Thank God for a Board of Directors and heads of business that came 100 percent clean and said "You need the ammunition and here she is" and they gave us a million dollars more than we have ever had in this world for sales and advertising. And they could have kept it for profits—but they didn't do it, they gave it to us, and believe me, with your help and God's help we are going to get them in 1923'—a perfect illustration of Dr Johnson's dictum: `Sir, a man is seldom so innocently employed as in making money.' Rather like a Christian sect, but uniquely for a commercial firm, Coke never changed its product. Coke learned to treat itself, and its customersthat is the entire nation—as a church, and above all a Congregational church, run by the pew—folk. The point was made by Robert Guizueta, Coke's chief executive in the 1980s, when the calamitous descent into heresy over the formula occurred: `It was then that we learned that, if the shareholders think they own this company, they are kidding themselves. The reality is that the American consumer owns Coca—Cola.'

Pepsi, a rival church, was also invented by a Southern druggist whose medical career had been frustrated by the Civil War. Caleb D. Bradham, born in North Carolina, created `Brad's Drink' in the 1890s but changed its name to Pepsi—Cola because he thought it could cure dyspepsia and bring relief to those suffering from peptic ulcers. Pepsi was less well run than Coke, went bankrupt twice, and competed mainly on price. But it, too, had a genius, Alfred N. Steele, born in 1901, called `a big—hitter salesman'—'When he came into bat he swung for the fences.' He told the bottlers in 1950: `I want to take you out of your Fords and put you into Cadillacs;' and again in 1954: `There are many among you in 1950 who told me yourselves you were afraid of going broke. Today, I am proud to say there are many among you who are millionaires. You don't only own Cadillacs—you can afford them.' He himself lived to marry Joan Crawford—and afford her. His `cola wars' with Coke were essentially battles between rival churches, with the added interest that they constituted a spectator sport. Roger E. Enrico, chief executive of Pepsi, said: `At Pepsi we *like* Cola Wars. We know they're good for business—for *all* soft drinks brands. You see, when the public gets interested in the Pepsi—Cola competition, often Pepsi doesn't win at Coke's expense and Coke doesn't win at Pepsi's. Everybody in the business wins. Consumer interest swells the market. The more fun we provide, the more people buy our products—*all* our products.' The `wars' were, he said, `a continuing battle without blood,' fought on the pages of magazines and on the airwaves, where the messages were quasi—religious too. The Bible Belt uplift approach to selling soft drinks was especially marked in World War Two when the head of Coke made `a solemn pledge' that properly iced Coke would be made available to all members of the US armed forces, wherever they were stationed. General Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890—1969), commanding the invasion of Europe, saw to it that ten separate bottling plants, which followed the front, were stretched across his entire command, to provide the maximum possible defense against alcohol. From first to last Coke and Pepsi were commercial rivals—separated churches, as it were—but the real enemy, the Devil as it were, was hard liquor.

That was the position when Middle America embarked on its war against drink—which had both the evangelical spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers and the witchhunting fanaticism of the Salem elders. It was also infused by the feeling that pleasure itself was enviable and sinful. America has always been a land of righteous persecution, whether under the banner of Calvinism, purity, anti—Communism, anti—racism, feminism, or Political Correctness. It has turned out some notable Savonarolas in its time. In the 19th century, Prohibition went hand in hand not only with

anti—slavery but with anti—obscenity. Anthony Comstock (1844—1915), for instance, was an abolitionist who fought fanatically for the Union in the Civil War and a noted campaigner against alcohol. But his chief work in life was to be secretary, for fortythree years, to the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. His personal and public war against obscene publications is told in his books, *Frauds Exposed* (1880), *Traps for the Young* (1883), and *Morals Versus Art* (1887). He virtually founded the Society in 1873, and the same year the US Post Office made him a special agent which allowed him to go into any US Post Office and search for mail he suspected to be obscene. He persuaded Congress to amend an 1865 law, so that it became a crime knowingly to send obscene material through the mails. He also got Congress to amend legislation so that it became criminal to send information about, or to advertise, obscene publications, contraception, or abortion. This was the Comstock Law. In its first six months, Comstock boasted of the seizure of 194,000 obscene pictures and photos, 134,000 pounds of books, 14,200 stereopticon plates, 60,300 `rubber articles,' 5,500 sets of playing cards, and 31,150 boxes of aphrodisiacs. Later, Comstock claimed that over his entire career he had destroyed `sixteen tons of vampire literature' and convicted on obscenity charges `enough persons to fill a passenger train of sixty—one coaches—sixty coaches containing sixty passengers each and the sixty—first not quite full'—he was a stickler for precise statistics. He prosecuted booksellers for having Zola, Flaubert, Balzac, and Tolstoy on sale, though most of his work dealt with repellent trash. The Catholic Church, for its own reasons, did not approve of him, but he was backed by the Wasp establishment, his society being subsidized by, among others, J. Pierpont Morgan, William F. Dodge Jr, the car manufacturer, and Samuel Colgate, the toothpaste tycoon.

Comstock argued that obscene publications, prostitution, and the sale of hard liquor were intimately linked by commerce and corruption. That was a common view. There were many Americans who believed, in the 19th century, that if only the sale of alcohol could be made unlawful, not only alcoholism and drunkenness could be stamped out but the country could be morally improved in countless other distinct ways. To some extent this view was shared by many leading statesmen, though they differed about the means. Thomas Jefferson characteristically believed the cultivation of the vine would provide what he called `a safe alternative to ardent spirits.' James Madison wanted all young men to `take the pledge.' Abraham Lincoln thought `intoxicating liquors' came forth `like the Egyptian angel of death, commissioned to slay, if not the first—born, then the fairest born of every family.' He said he did not drink `because I like it so much.' US spirits were normally bottled at 80 percent proof, and during the 1830s the per—capita consumption of absolute alcohol in America was calculated at 7.1 gallons annually, an alarming figure considering that many if not most women, and most slaves, did not touch alcohol at all, or consumed it only in small quantities. Hence the name for America, the `Alcoholic Republic."

In the 1840s a businessman called Neal Dow in Portland, Maine, made a study of the effects of alcohol there and discovered that an astonishing range of evils, from family violence, crime, and poverty to incompetence and loss of production in factories, were, as he put it, ‚alcohol—related.' He thought competition among `grog shops' was the prime cause of `excessive consumption' of alcohol. In 1851 he persuaded the state legislature to pass the `Maine Law,' which banned the sale of alcohol. Thirteen of the thirty states had similar laws by 1855. The rise of the Republican Party, which wanted to broaden its base in the North by recruiting Irish and German Catholics, and German and Scandinavian Lutherans, who were generally opposed to Prohibition, took anti—alcohol off its platform. After the Civil War, however, militant women

took up the cause—it was often, as we have seen, an alternative to suffrage—campaigning—and it was women who were chiefly behind the Anti—Saloon League of America, which in 1895 held its first annual convention. Enlisting Protestant congregations as basic campaigning units, the ASL was astonishingly adept at guiding legislatures through a cumulative series of reforms—in the process doing democracy itself a favor—ending in total abolition. It was notable that `dry' legislatures usually favored women's suffrage too. By 1916 twenty—one states had banned saloons. That year the national elections returned a Congress where dry members outnumbered wets by more than two to one. In December 1917 Congress submitted to the states the Eighteenth Amendment, which, when ratified in 1919, changed the Constitution to ban `the manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors.' The Volstead Act, making America dry, had already been passed: the amendment finally made it constitutional, and Bryan, now an old man, was presented with a vast silver loving—cup in token of his `prodigious efforts' to insure ratification.

The imposition of Prohibition, and its failure, illustrates perfectly a number of important principles in American history. First, it shows the widespread belief in America that utopia can be achieved in the hereand—now and the millennium secured in this world, as well as the next. Second, it indicates a related belief that `Americanization' can be achieved by compulsion and law. Third, it draws attention to a weakness in American public opinion and policy—a tendency to will the end without willing the means (`freeing' the blacks was another instance). The Volstead Act was a compromise: if it had provided ruthless means of enforcement it would never have become law. The Prohibition Bureau was attached to the Treasury—efforts to make it part of the Justice Department were defeated. Successive presidents refused to recommend appropriations needed to secure effective enforcement. Fourth, the utopianism inherent in Prohibition came up against the utopianism inherent in the rooted and active American principle that freedom of enterprise must be totally unrestricted. Being one of the least totalitarian countries on earth, America possessed virtually none of the apparatus to keep market forces in check once an unfulfilled need had appeared. What Prohibition did was to transfer the manufacture, sale, and distribution of liquor from legitimate to criminal forces. The speed at which this happened and the illicit system appeared was characteristic of American dynamism. In no time at all—mere months—the liquor gangsters and their backers commanded more physical and financial resources than the law.

Prohibition also illustrated Karl Popper's Law of Unintended Effect, America being the ideal arena in which this law, one of history's great ironies, operates. Ultra—American Prohibitionists proclaimed that it was directed chiefly at the `notorious drinking habits' of `immigrant working men.' In fact, far from driving alien minorities into Anglo—Saxon conformity, it enabled them to consolidate themselves. Prohibition was one of the turning—points in a long process whereby the Anglo—Saxondescended possessing class was driven from its position of preeminence. In New York, for instance, bootlegging was half—Jewish, one—quarter Italian, and one—quarter Polish and Irish. Those of Anglo—Saxon descent were mere consumers, it is true enthusiastic ones—Edmund Wilson delightedly listed the additions that bootlegging made to the English vocabulary, swelling the number of expressions and words for degrees of intoxication to over 300. In Chicago it was the same story: Italians and Irish shared the loot, the old Anglo—Saxon elites merely drank. The Italians proved themselves particularly adept in distributing illicit liquor in an orderly and inexpensive manner, drawing not merely on the experience of the Sicilian, Neapolitan, and Sardinian criminal societies but on revolutionary syndicalism.

Prohibition offered matchless opportunities for `aliens' to subvert society, particularly in Chicago under the corrupt mayoralty of `Big Bill' Thompson. John Torrio, who ran large—scale bootlegging in Chicago 1920—4, retired to Italy in 1925 with a fortune of $30 million. No one in the history of the world had made this kind of money from organizing crime before. Then and later it made the young, ambitious, and criminally inclined think furiously about possible career—prospects. Torrio practiced the new Leninist principle of `total control:' all officials were bribed according to their rank and all elections were rigged. Torrio could deliver high—quality beer for as little as $50 a barrel and his success was based on the avoidance of violence by diplomacy: he secured agreement among gangsters for the orderly assignment of territory. In fact bootleggers were most successful when they conformed most closely to the methods of legitimate business. Torrio's lieutenant and successor, Al Capone, was less politically minded and therefore less successful; and the Irish operators tended to think in the short term and resort to violent solutions. When this happened, gang—warfare ensued, the public became angry, and the authorities were driven to intervene. As a rule, however, bootleggers operated with public approval, at any rate in the cities. Most urban men (not women) agreed with Mencken that Prohibition was the work of `ignorant bumpkins of the cow states who resent the fact they had to swill raw corn liquor while city slickers got good wine and whiskey.' It had `little behind it, philosophically speaking, save the envy of the country lout for the city man, who has a much better time of it in this world.'

Attitudes being what they were, cleaning up a city while Prohibition was still in force was virtually impossible. General Smedley Butler of the US Marine Corps, put in charge of the Philadelphia police in 1924 under a `new broom' administration, gave up the job after less than two years, saying it was a `waste of time.' Politicians of both parties gave little help. At the 1920 Democratic convention in San Francisco delegates gleefully drank illegal first—class whiskey provided free by the mayor. The Republicans bitterly resented the fact that, at their Cleveland convention of 1914, `Prohibition agents clamped down on the city with the utmost ferocity' (Mencken again). Mencken claimed: `Even in the most remote country districts, there is absolutely no place in which any man who desires to drink alcohol cannot get it.' The journalist Walter Ligget, who made himself the greatest living expert on the subject, testified to the House Judiciary Committee in February 1930 that `there is considerably more hard liquor being drunk than there was in the days before Prohibition and ... drunk in more evil surroundings,' as he could prove by `a truckload of detail and explicit facts.' Washington DC, he said, had 300 bars before Prohibition: now it had 700 speakeasies, supplied by 4,000 bootleggers. Police records showed arrests for drunkenness had trebled over the decade. Massachusetts had jumped from 1,000 licensed saloons to 4,000 speakeasies, plus a further 4,000 in Boston alone, where there were `at least 15,000 people who do nothing except purvey booze illegally.' Kansas had been the first state to go dry; had been dry for half a century; yet `there is not a town in Kansas where I cannot go as a total stranger and get a drink of liquor and very good liquor at that, within fifteen minutes of my arrival.`

Socially, the experience was a catastrophe for the United States. It brought about a qualitative and permanent change in the scale and sophistication of American organized crime. Running large—scale beerconvoys required powers of organization which were soon put to use elsewhere. From the early 1920s, gambling syndicates used phonebanks to take bets from all over the country. Meyer Lansky and Benjamin Siegel adapted bootlegging patterns to organize huge nationwide gambling empires. Prohibition generated enormous funds which were then reinvested not only in gambling but in other forms of largescale crime such as prostitution and

drug—smuggling. It was the `takeoff point' for big crime in America, and of course it continued after the Twenty—first Amendment, which ended Prohibition, was finally ratified in December 1933. Throughout the 1930s organized crime matured, and it was from 1944 onwards, for instance, that the small desert town of Las Vegas was transformed into the world's gambling capital. Prohibition, far from `Americanizing' minorities, tended to reinforce minority characteristics through specific patterns of crime: especially among Italians, Jews, Irish, and, not least, blacks, where from the early 1920s the West Indian immigrants introduced the `numbers game' and other gambling rings, forming powerful black—ghetto crime—citadels in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Detroit. Studies by the Justice Department's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration in the 1970s indicate that the beginning of Prohibition in the 1920s was the startingpoint for most identifiable crime—families, which continue to flourish and perpetuate themselves today at the end of the loth century.

Prohibition was a characteristically 20th—century exercise in social engineering which ended by doing unintended, enormous, and permanent damage to society. Reformers were more successful in dealing with other forms of vice, such as prostitution, because their approach was more intelligent and aimed not to stamp out altogether the sale of women's bodies but to suppress its most antisocial institutions and aspects. Thus, Congressional legislation in 1903 and 1907 made unlawful the importation of prostitutes and permitted the deportation of alien women who engaged in prostitution. The Mann Act of 1910, which made the transportation of women across state borders for `immoral purposes' a crime, was a highly successful statute in itself but also proved unexpectedly useful in dealing with organized crime. Society also succeeded in dealing with America's brothel culture, though there the struggle was more difficult.

America's premier Sin City, from the late 1840s up to the end of the 1920s, was San Francisco, founded by Juan Nautista de Anza (1735—88) in 1776 and called Yerba Buer until christened by its present name in 1847. Two years later the gold rush transformed it from a small village into a lawless frontier town, then a great international port. By 1880, with a population of 233,000, it had become the financial and cultural metropolis of the Far West. It had its magnificent millionaire mansions on Nob Hill but it also had the Barbary Coast, a redlight area which served the whole of the West—and an area where available women were notoriously outnumbered by young men who made high wages not just in the gold and silver mines but in many other occupations. The Barbary Coast was bounded by Broadway, Kierney, Montgomery, and Pacific Avenue and it was a collection of bars, dance—halls, and gambling joints. A typical set—up was the Bull Run on the corner of Jackson and Kierney Streets, which had a lowclass dance—hall and bar in the cellar, a middle—class bar and dance—hall on the ground floor, and a brothel upstairs. The joint at the corner of Kierney and California Streets was the first (1885) topless bar in the United States. Other combination joints were the Louisiana, the Rosebud, the Occidental, Brook's Melodium, the Billy Goat and the Coliseum, all of which had professional comedians and dancers, with names like the Dancing Heifer, the Waddling Duck, and the Little Lost Chicken. All they lacked was a Toulouse—Lautrec to record them for posterity. The Bella Union, on the corner of Washington and Kierney Streets, introduced some outstanding performers, such as Eddie Foy, who fathered a great theatrical family, Flora Walsh, Lottie Crabtree, and Harrigan and Hart, who went on to become America's most popular vaudeville team in the Progressive Era. There was even a male whorehouse on Mason Street, with twelve young men and boys available—San Francisco's record as a homosexual centre goes back well into the 19th century.

The King of the Barbary Coast, from 1901 to 1916, was Jerome Bassity (real name Jerry McGlane), who controlled dance—halls, saloons, a pornographic theater, and over 200 prostitutes with names like Emilie, Lucy, Fifi, Madame Weston, Elenore, Madame St Armand, Artemise, Helen, and Lucienne. Bassity introduced a number of notorious dances, banned in other places, such as the Bunny—Hug, the Turkey Trot, the Texas Tommy, and the Hoochy—Koochy, which had been introduced at the *Streets of Cairo* Show at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. San Francisco was the first town to make popular cheek—tocheek and belly—to—belly dancing, regarded as the depth of depravity in 1890, still risque in 1915, just acceptable among the young in 1920, and which has since become normal all over the world.

Curiously enough, the man who cleaned up San Francisco was the monster portrayed in *Citizen Kane*, William Randolph Hearst (1863—1951). When he was twenty—four, his father, a mining millionaire and US Senator from California, gave him the *San Francisco Examiner*. Hearst had been expelled from Harvard for `riotous behavior' and his father thought the newspaper toy would calm him down. Quite the reverse occurred. Hearst spent $8 million turning the *Examiner* into a huge commercial success, then challenged Pulitzer in New York, helped to start the Spanish—American War, endorsed political assassination as what he called a `mental exercise,' and was blamed for the slaying of President McKinley. He sat for New York in the House, got 40 percent of the votes in one ballot at the Democratic presidential convention of 1904, and acquired seven dailies, five magazines, two news—services, and a movie company.

The coming of World War One dramatically expanded prostitution in America, and many other forms of `riotous behavior.' But it also made it possible for drastic action to be taken under wartime legislation. At this stage in his life Hearst was a radical, praised by Upton Sinclair for his `socialism,' and the darling of the trade union movement, who asked him to found a paper for them. His *Examiner* led a campaign in conjunction with the Central Methodist Church and the Police Department to shut the Barbary Coast down. They got the state to enact the Red Light Abatement Act, eventually declared constitutional by the California supreme court (1916), and enforcement began on January 1, 1917. At that point the San Francisco prostitutes held a mass meeting and marched to the Central Methodist Church, where their leader, Mrs Gamble, had an angry dialog with the minister, the Rev. Paul Smith. It went: `What are we to do when you close us down?' `Take refuge in religion.' `Can we eat that? There isn't a woman here who would be a prostitute if she could make a decent living in any other way. They've all tried it.' `A woman can remain virtuous on ten dollars a week [*laughter*] and statistics show that families all over the country receive less.' `That's why there's prostitution—come on, girls, there's nothing for us here.' Three weeks later, on February 14, 1917, the entire Barbary Coast quarter was surrounded by police, over 1,000 women were driven out of their rooms, forty saloons were closed down, and scores of cafes and cabarets shut.

Hearst's campaign against San Francisco's whores was, as it were, a bridge period between his early radicalism and his later mood of somber reaction. He was of no consequence in himself—much less interesting than the fictional Kane—but his life in the Twenties gives us an illuminating glimpse of America's quintessentially utopian state, California, in its most eccentric and endearing period. Hearst was always inheriting estates and then building fantastic structures on them. He was willed, for instance, 50,000 acres at Wyntoon on the Oregon border, and along the McCloud River there he constructed a Fairy House, a Cinderella House, a Bridge House over the waters, and a magic castle, as well as a cemetery for his numerous pets—a personal Disneyland in fact. His exploit in transporting St Donat's Castle from Britain and rebuilding it in the United States has been often described.

Less well known, unfortunately, is his commissioning Julia Morgan (1872—1957), America's greatest woman architect, to erect for him what is arguably the finest building in North America (north of the Mexican border, anyway). Hearst inherited the San Simeon estate in California when his mother died of the influenza epidemic in 1919. He determined to build there a house which united all that was best and grandest in the Spanish—American and Anglo—American traditions, and he picked Morgan because she had already made a reputation for herself locally in doing precisely that. A rare photograph shows the two together—the enormous, genial, and sinister Hearst, and the tiny (five foot) Morgan, in her neat, severely tailored suit and expensive silk blouse, the epitome of fierce proto—lesbianism. The only thing they had in common was a love of architecture. He signed his letters to her `William Viollet—le—Duc Hearst, Architect,' and she said of him: `He loves architecturing.' Their letters reveal a close, and in all the circumstances amazingly sweet—tempered, association, which yielded splendid results.

Morgan was an example of what was then called the New Woman. She came from San Francisco and went to Berkeley as an engineering student because there was no degree—course in architecture. She then went to Paris and was the first woman to receive a degree in architecture from the Ecole des Beaux Arts. Her career was a remarkable success, both artistically and commercially, and she designed and saw constructed over 700 buildings, many of them very large indeed. His vast house or houses at San Simeon started out as what Hearst called `a Jappo—Swisso bungalow.' From that it evolved into a Latino palace surrounded by villas on a hilltop which surveys the world. The cluster—idea came from the eastern American idea of the `camp.' Rich Americans, trying to return to the backwoods tradition, built themselves luxury wooden shack—mansions in the woods, first in the Adirondacks, then in many wild places. It was the United States adaptation of the English urge, led by Queen Victoria, to find refuge from modernity in the primitive Scottish Highlands. But whereas the English built castles, like Balmoral, the Americans erected camps. The most famous example of this genre is the presidential lodge, Camp David. The archetype was Sagamore Lodge, built for Alfred Vanderbilt by a local Adirondack entrepreneur, William Durant, in 1898—1900. A camp had a central tent for eating surrounded by smaller tents for sleeping. This evolved, in Hearst's case, into a central building with three guest *cottages ornees*, all on a sumptuous scale. It was begun in 1920 and `finished' in 1926, but work continued thereafter.

The main building or Casa Grande, with its twin Spanish towers, is of reinforced concrete faced with stone. Neither Hearst nor Morgan had forgotten the calamitous San Francisco earthquake of 1907, so the house was made earthquake—proof, insofar as that is possible. It has 127 rooms. One of Morgan's specialities was swimming pools and in the big house she made a Roman pool for the rare rainy or cool days. But the Neptune pool outside, which is more Grecian, is the clou of the structure—perhaps the most beautiful swimming pool ever built. The three guest villas have a total of 187 rooms, including two libraries, fifty—eight bedrooms, and forty—seven bathrooms. The detailed accounts survive and they show that the Casa Grande cost Hearst $2,987,000, the Neptune pool $430,000, and the three `cottages' $500,000. Morgan's total charges for what in the end amounted to twenty—five years and 558 trips came to a modest $70,755. The houseparty atmosphere at San Simeon was communal. When the Calvin Coolidges stayed and asked for room service, they were told that all meals, including breakfast, were eaten in the dining—room. But the story of the house in the 1930s and 1940s was sad. Hearst was running out of money, and before he died in 1951 he even had to borrow the odd $1 million from his mistress, Marion Davies. In 1958 the Hearst Corporation presented San Simeon to the

California State Parks system, which has lovingly restored it and opened it to all, another example of how the American plutocracy ultimately benefits the American democracy.

Morgan was one of many gifted architects who flourished in California between the wars and helped to create its Janus—faced southern megalopolis centered round Los Angeles, the Nowhere City which is also the Everywhere City, the place where all styles, fashions, and fads meet. Los Angeles was mission territory until 1822, when it became part of Mexico and 8 million acres were seized from the church and redistributed in the form of 500 land grants which became vast ranches. Richard Henry Dana was there in 1838 compiling material for his *Two Years Before the Mast*: it was `remote' and `almost desert' and `there is neither law nor gospel.' It was seized by the United States in 1847, annexed in 1848 and incorporated as a city in 1850. It was from the start a highly interracial and tense city: in its first big race riot of 1871, nineteen Chinese were murdered. It had 11,000 people when it was linked to the intercontinental railroad system in 1876. Thereafter, competing railroads to the West Coast led to a mass migration in the 1880s. In 1887, when the price of a rail ticket from Kansas City to Los Angeles dropped to $12 and even to a nominal $1,120,000 people came west on the Southern Pacific alone.

The lure was originally health, rather than just sin. Lorin Blodgct, whose 1859 book *The Climatology of the United States* was widcl\ read, compared it to Italy and recommended living there for sufferers from tuberculosis, rheumatism, and asthma. In 1872 Charles Nordoff published a genuine bestseller, *California for Health, Pleasure and Residence*, a promotional book compiled on a Southern Pacific freehicjunket, which detonated the fitness rush. For the first time in American history, a `frontier' was created, and pioneers developed it, not for land or money or gold but for the sick and the invalid. Americans who did not go there were astonished by the quality of its fruit—at the 1893 Chicago Exposition, the Los Angeles publicist Frank Wiggins gave away 375,000 oranges on the first day. The California Pavilion was the most popular of all, housing an entire citrus grove and a knight on horseback made of prunes. By 1900 Los Angeles had 103,000 people and it was already crowded with fantastic buildings, such as the Bradbury Residence on Bunker Hill. What made it the city it has become was the California Bungalow, an exotic and osmotic variation on the Anglo—Indian one, with mission—style and Chinese—Oriental elements. Many beautiful houses were built, such as the Gamble House (1908) designed by Charles and Henry Greene, who specialized in luxury bungalows. They had large gardens and that dictated a big spread, which began long before the automobile arrived. Los Angeles was bungalow—driven, not car—driven, and it was already a suburban city in 1905, with no real center.

This sprawling, sunny city sucked in people voraciously from all over America (and abroad). In 1900—20 it grew to 575,000 with another 325,000 in the surrounding countryside. In the Twenties the immigration accelerated to 100,000 a year, giving Los Angeles 2.2 million at the end of the decade. It was the largest single internal migration in American history. What made Los Angeles successful was not just the sun and the land. It was also power—and many other forms of energy, including human ingenuity. The first oil strike was made by Edward Doheny in 1892. When his royalties poured in he built himself the first of the Los Angeles monster—mansions, a GothickRomanesque—Oriental—Mughal chateau. Oil was struck at La Brea (1902), Fairfax (1904), and in Beverly Hills (1908). There was another, huge strike in 1920—1. One oil tycoon, Alphonso Bell, had zoo acres in what became the Santa Fe field. Royalties brought him in $100,000 a month and with it he bought 2,000 acres on which he built the Beverley Hills Hotel and Bel Air. With oil aplenty, water was scarce and frantic political battles were fought over water—rights and irrigation schemes. An arid tract like the San Fernando Valley became

immensely valuable once it was irrigated. By 1903 Los Angeles was already reaching out 250 miles into the mountains for water. With the approval and help of Theodore Roosevelt, the giant aqueduct to the Valley took five years, 5,000 workers, 142 tunnels, 120 miles of railroads, and 500 miles of roads before it was finished in November 1913. All this was a prolegomenon to the giant schemes revolving round the Colorado and Hoover dams. Moreover, harnessing rivers and delivering water were linked directly to power supply and electrification.

Indeed, it was electricity which made California, a decade before the German scientist Karl Ballod published *Der Zukunftsstaat* (1919), advocating the 'all—electric state.' This was the book Lenin read and which led him to pronounce: `Communism is Soviet power plus electrification of the whole country.' In California, the slogan went `Electricity is the road to the health, wealth and happiness of mankind.' The long—distance power supply based on harnessed water dates back in California to 1903—6, and in 1909 an engineering genius called Erza F. Scattergood became the chief electrical engineer of Los Angeles. He was an enormously energetic Rutgers graduate who came to Southern California for his health and soon made himself boss of the biggest municipal power system in the world. It was Scattergood, a consummate diplomatic and political maneuverer as well as a fanatical engineering modernist, who brought together the coalition of seven states which got colossal quantities of water and power to share out among them by harnessing the Columbia River system to a vast dam at Boulder Canyon, Nevada. It was his work that lay at the root of the Tennessee Valley Authority concept in the age of F. D. Rooseveltwhich was why the President invited him to see the site of the TVA at Muscle Shoals in 1933.

Scattergood made Californian electricity cheap and available virtually everywhere in the region. By 1912 California was next to New York in quantities of electric power used, an astonishing performance. During World War One, the decision was taken to pool all the power of this 1,200—miles—long state through a single, central administration. By 1914, in the United States as a whole, only 35 percent of homes were wired for electricity, but in California the figure was 83 percent. Nationally, the cost per kilowatt—hour averaged $2.17. In California it was $1.42. By generating 10 percent of all the electric power in the US, the state was able to benefit the farmers as well as city—dwellers. In 1924, when 90 percent of all farms in America were still without electricity at all, it was not unusual to see all—electric farms in California, with electrically milked cows, electric pumps irrigating orchards and fields, and the full range of appliances in the farmhouse.

Equally important, especially in Los Angeles and its surrounds, was the all—electric transport system. Henry Edwards Huntington (1850—1927), nephew of the Southern Pacific railroad tycoon Collis Potter Huntington (1821—1900), who sold control of the Southern to Harriman in 1903, thereafter had two main interests. One was to collect books and art for his great Foundation, the Huntington Library at San Marino near Pasadena. The other was to equip Southern California with the largest, cheapest, and most efficient inter—urban transport system in the world. From 1902 he bought up the various networks in and around Los Angeles and melted them into one, the Pacific Electric. It ran for 1,164 miles and welded into an entity fortytwo incorporated cities and towns within a 35—mile radius of central Los Angeles. It was these giant, thundering electric cars, familiar to students of early movies because they appear in many Keystone Kops, Laurel and Hardy, and Hal Roach shorts, which made Southern California a prime growth area. It no longer exists but, almost without exception, the Los Angeles area freeways follow its routes.

And cheap electricity fueled the continuing California boom, through the Twenties, through the difficult Thirties, and beyond. Scattergood's Boulder Canyon project ran into powerful opposition from vested interests, which meant delays, and digging did not start till 1930. But then it became a world phenomenon, attracting highway construction giants like Henry J. Kaiser (1882—1967), who became chairman of the building consortium in 1933. Federal money paid for most of it, including construction of a workers' base in the Nevada Desert called Boulder City—and FDR himself dedicated the completed dam in 1935. It was the biggest dam in the world, followed by three other linked dams, Parker, Bonneville, and Grand Coulee. Its cheap power made possible the vast manufacturing industries which flourished in California during World War Two, and transformed the entire West Coast, enriching it still further. Further north, in Seattle, a disciple of Scattergood, J. D. Ross, also preached the gospel of cheap electricity, and practiced it. By the 1930s Seattle had more electric ranges than any other American city. A few years later it, too, was sharing in the wartime industrial expansion which, today, makes it the center of the US aviation industry.

Cheap electricity was also one of the factors which turned Southern California into the world center of the new movie industry. The other two were sunshine and, above all—and ironically in view of California's reputation today—freedom from litigation. To put it another way, movies were the product of a marriage between California and Ashkenazi Jews. This followed an earlier union between Jewish productive and creative genius and New York. In 1890 there was not a single amusement arcade in New York. By 1900 there were over 1,000, and fifty of them already called Nickelodeons. Eight years later there were 400 of them in New York alone and they were spreading all over the Northern cities. They cost five cents and appealed to the poorest of the urban poor. The hundreds of movies made for them were silent. That was an advantage. Few of the patrons spoke English. It was an immigrant art—form—and so the ideal setting for Jewish enterprise. At first the Jews merely owned the Nickelodeons, the arcades, and the theaters. Most of the copyright processes, and the shorts, were owned by American—born Protestants. An exception was Sigmund Lublin, operating from the great Jewish center of Philadelphia, which he might have turned into the capital of the industry. But when the theater—owners began to go into production, to make the shorts their immigrant patrons wanted, Lublin joined with the other patent—owners to form the giant Patent Company and extract full dues out of the movie—makers. It was then that the Jews led the industry on a new Exodus, from the `Egypt' of the Wasp—dominated Northeast to the Promised Land of California. Los Angeles had easy laws and, if needs be, a quick escape into Mexico from the Patent Company lawyers and from another litigational killjoy, the New York Film Trust.

The first California movie, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, made by the Selig Polyscope company in 1907, had nothing to do with Hollywood. That was then a stuck—up religious place, founded in 1887 by two Methodists, Horace and Daeida Wilcox, who hoped to turn it into a Bible—thumping district. When Hollywood was incorporated as a city in 1903, it banned not only oil—prospecting and slaughterhouses but sanitariums, liquor, and movie—houses. But it ran out of water, and to get some was forced into incorporation with Los Angeles in 1910, thus losing its autonomy. So the next year it got its first movie—studio, and in 1913 Cecil B. DeMille's crew arrived to film *The Squaw Man*, having been driven out of Arizona by dust—storms. Not that Southern California in general, and Los Angeles in particular, are nature—free. Landslides are ubiquitous. There have been major earthquakes in 1933 and 1971, and everyone now waits for the Big One. There are also specially irritating air currents, known as Santa Ana Winds, which

detonate rages. One is described in *Red Wind*, a story by Raymond Chandler, the prose—poet of Los Angeles: `A time when every boozeparty ends in a fight and meek little wives feel the edge of the carving knife and study their husbands' necks.' But most of the time the climate is benign and movie—makers found it cut costs by almost half. They were not liked by the then – inhabitants (not natives: even in the 1990s half the population of California was born elsewhere). In 1913, over 10,000 citizens of Los Angeles signed a petition to ban movie—making within the city limits. They signed themselves Conscientious Citizens and claimed the movies would bring immorality. Were they so far wrong? But they were turned down and by 1915 the Hollywood payroll was already $20 million annually and growing fast—the new arrival was too big to be ejected.

The same year, the first characteristic Hollywood structure, Universal City, was built and a movie a day was turned out in it. This was the work of Carl Laemmle (1867—1939), first of the Jewish movie tycoons. Nearly all of them conformed to a pattern. They were immigrants or of immediate immigrant stock. They were poor, often desperately poor. Many came from families of twelve or more children. Laemmle was an immigrant from Laupheim, the tenth of thirteen children. He worked in clerical jobs, as a book—keeper and a clothing—store manager, before opening a Nickelodeon, turning it into a chain, creating a movie—distribution business, and then founding Universal, the first big studio, in 1912. Marcus Loew (1871—1927) was born on the Lower East Side, the son of an immigrant waiter. He sold papers at six, left school at twelve to work in printing, then furs, was an independent fur—broker at eighteen, had been twice bankrupted by the age of thirty, founded a theater—chain, and then put together Metro—Goldwyn Mayer. William Fox (1879—1952) was born in Hungary, one of twelve children, and came through New York's Castle Garden Immigration Station as a child. He left school at eleven for the garment industry, set up his own shrinking business, then progressed through Brooklyn penny—arcades to a movie—chain, Twentieth Century—Fox.

Louis B. Mayer (1885—1957) was born in Russia, the son of a Hebrew scholar, and also came through Castle Garden as a child, went into the junk trade at the age of eight, had his own junk business by nineteen, a theater—chain by twenty—two, and in 1915 made the first big adult movie, *Birth of a Nation*. The Warner Brothers were among the nine children of a poor cobbler from Poland. They worked selling meat and ice—cream, repairing bicycles, as fairground barkers and traveling showmen. In 1904 they bought a film—projector and ran their own show, with their sister Rose playing the piano and twelve—year—old Jack singing treble. Joseph Schenck, co—founder of United Artists, ran an amusement park. Sam Goldwyn worked as a blacksmith's assistant and a glove—salesman. Harry Cohn, another Lower East Sider, was a trolley—conductor, then in vaudeville. Jessy Lasky was a cornet player. Sam Katz was a messenger boy but owned three Nickelodeons in his teens. Dore Schary worked as a waiter in a holiday camp. Adolph Zukor, from a family of rabbis, worked as a fur—salesman. So did Darryl Zanuck, who made his first money with a fur—clasp. Not all these pioneers kept the studios and fortunes they built up. Some went bankrupt. Fox and Schenck even went to jail. But Zukor summed up for them all: `I arrived from Hungary an orphan boy of sixteen with a few dollars sewn inside my vest. I was thrilled to breathe the fresh, strong air of freedom, and America has been good to me.'

Yes; and Hollywood was even better. The scale of the operation was soon as big as Scattergood's power schemes. D. W. Griffith, director of the epoch—making *Birth of a Nation*, followed it with *Intolerance* (1916), an epic which cost $2 million and employed 15,000 extras. Its gigantic set of Babylon was the first to become a tourist attraction. By 1920, some 100,000

people were involved in producing movies in the Los Angeles area and they had become the biggest industry in the city, grossing a billion dollars a year. Movies made millionaires, or people who lived like them, and they in turn built themselves paradisical habitations which gave the city—the entire area indeed—its characteristic physiognomy of sentimental pandemonium. In 1920, Gloria Swanson, having starred in DeMille's *Male and Female* (1919) and *Why Change Your Wife?* (1920), built herself a twenty—two—room, five—bath sort—ofRenaissance palace in Beverly Hills, floored it in black marble, put in golden bathtubs and hung it in peacock silk, saying, `I will be every inch and every moment a star.' Douglas Fairbanks put up a `Hunting Lodge' near by on the top of the hill.

That did it—a colony of glittering eccentrics was founded, each in his or her own mini—Babylonian setting. And beyond Beverly Hills, in the valleys and canyons around, and in the lowlands to the sea, and in Los Angeles itself, architects and their indiscriminately picky clients competed to shock, astonish, and display. Egyptian and Mayan temples, Malay longhouses, Chinese and Siamese pagodas, Spanish baroque cathedrals, Romanesque churches, Renaissance palaces, Moorish and Arab mosques—all these forms became the models for houses, shops, office—buildings, and filling—stations. The Los Angeles Theater had a foyer modeled on Versailles' Hall of Mirrors. The lobby of the Tower Theater was a recreation of the Paris Opera's. Many buildings were copied from pictures in children's story—books. There were Assyrian ziggurats and Babylonian Hanging Gardens. The 1926 Los Angeles Public Library, by Bertram Goodhue, was a combination of Roman, Islamic, Egyptian, and Byzantine styles. The Brown Derby Restaurant was in the shape of a brown derby hat. There was the Hansel and Gretel Cottage, another diner. The Chili Bowl Restaurant was just that—a painted, ferro—concrete chili bowl. Hoo Hoo I Scream was—an ice—cream parlor. A lot of the construction was made to look like food: tomato—sauce roofs, marshmallow igloos, pagodas of peanut butter, Florentine pink nougat, haciendas of chili con carne. There were houses which looked like dogs, fruit, vegetables, owls, pigs, and windmills.

Into this phantasmagoria inevitably stepped Frank Lloyd Wright (1867—1959). He was from Chicago, where he had been a junior in the great firm of Adler & Sullivan. But the artistic, emotional, and cultural climate of Southern California suited him well. The series of important commissions he carried out in Los Angeles began in 1917 with a house for Aline Barnsadall, an oil heiress described as eccentric—egregious would be a better word. The house he built her was made of precast concrete blocks and looked like a Mayan sacrificial temple on the outside, the front door being of concrete. Inside, a moat ran round the fireplace. Construction was punctuated by some classic architect—client rows, a Wright specialty. He used blocks for a number of what he called Mesoamerican houses in Los Angeles. These `textile blocks' (his name) often went into the interior as decorative walls, for instance in his dramatic Ennis House.

Wright was a Hollywood character in his own dispensation, his life, and the houses he designed for himself, being a series of inexplicable dramas. In August 1914 his Modern Movement abode, Taliesin, was the setting for a massacre when his black servant, Julian Carlton, axed to death Wright's mistress, Mamah Borthwick, and six other people (some of whom he also burned). The murderer starved himself to death in jail. In 1925 Taliesin II, another ultra—modernistic concept, was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. Wright then built Taliesin III, where he installed an architectural community, rather on the lines of Brook Farm, but run by him with an iron, or perhaps one should say a ferro—concrete, hand. The Taliesin Fellowship, as he called it, was part—Arcadian community, part—William Morris enterprise, which involved group—therapy in the mode of Gurdjieff, his terrifying third wife Olgivanna

having been a pupil of the sage. The Fellowship was essentially an attempt to solve Wright's insoluble financial problems by employing pupils and associates in endless Ruskinian hard physical work: `Frank has reinvented slave labor,' as the joke went. The master was notorious for never paying anyone, `except under the greatest duress.'

Taliesin III was also part—theater, with Wright as chief actor during his drafting sessions. Unitarian services were held on Sunday, Wright having rewritten `Jesu joy of Man's Desiring' as the Fellowship hymn (Joy in work is man's desiring' etc.). There were lots of games, parties, sleigh trips, boating expeditions, and charades, with formal dinner on Sundays, the Wrights sitting on a dais like a king and queen. Recorded or performed music, chiefly Beethoven, was relayed by concealed loudspeakers in every room of the house. Offenders, who were many, were brought before a species of family court, presided over by Wright himself. At the age of eighty—nine, Wright testified in the witness—box he was `the greatest architect in the world.' His wife told him modesty would have been more effective. Wright replied: `You forget, Olgivanna, that I was under oath.' Half Taliesin III was built, the other half was falling down, and the whole was never finished. But some apprentices loved it and lived to flourish. And in California, at least, Wright had succeeded, by the end of the 1920s, in creating a prime testing area for the International Modern Movement.

Ordinary Californians, however, continued to indulge their own peculiarities and prejudices. While the great architects thundered and created, the average Los Angeles householder preferred varieties of Spanish—American, just as English families choose mock—Tudor, if they get the chance. And Hollywood itself, after a period of turmoil, became as American as apple pie, albeit one with a lavish cream topping and heavily decorated with crystalized fruit. In 1920—1 the trial of Roscoe `Fatty' Arbuckle, Hollywood's most highly paid star, the murder of the director William Desmond Taylor, the divorce of Mary Pickford, who played `good girl' roles, and the death of the actor Wallace Reid from a drugs overdose combined to scare the studio moguls into cleaning up their scenarios. They hired Will H. Hays (1879—1954) of Indiana, for mer Republican National Chairman and Harding's PostmasterGeneral, at the then enormous salary of $100,000 to clean up Hollywood and lay down a code for the future. Hays cleared Arbuckle but he drove hundreds of others out of the industry on grounds of sexual depravity, homosexuality, drug abuse, and prostitution, and he inserted `morals clauses' into stars' contracts. The Hays Code insisted that directors should avoid the following: kisses lasting more than seven feet of film, clergy in comic or villain roles, the `explicit,' 'attractive,' or `justified' treatment of adultery and fornication, nudity under any circumstances, sympathy for `murder, safecracking, arson, smuggling etc in such detail as to tempt amateurs to try their hands,' and `all low, disgusting, unpleasant though not necessarily evil subjects.' Positively directors should follow `the dictates of good taste and regard for the sensibilities of the audience.' Hays went into considerable detail: if an actor or an actress were seated or lying on a bed, albeit fully clothed, one and preferably both should have one foot on the ground.

Hays evoked sniggers at the time, and abuse since his death, but his rules were accepted and adhered to for forty years, during which Hollywood movies became a hugely successful industry and one of America's most lucrative and culturally effective exports. From 1923 studios ceased to delete American expressions and slang (and accents) for foreign, especially English—speaking, audiences because they found that Americanisms were part of the attractions of the product. At home, movies stressed patriotism, loyalty, truth—telling, family life, the importance and sanctity of religion, courage, fidelity, crime—does—notpay, and the rewards of virtue. They also underpinned democracy, Republicanism, the rule of law, and social justice. Their

presentation of American life was in all essentials the same as Norman Rockwell's Post covers. And the homogenizing effect, the encouragement to accept allAmerican norms, was far more successful than the crude social engineering of the Red Scare and Prohibition. The power of the movie increased dramatically after sound was introduced in *The Jazz Singer*, October 6, 1927, and the first full—length `talking picture' was shown in July 1928. In 1928 only 1,300 of America's 20,000 movie houses were equipped for sound. By December 1930, over 10,000 were and the 57 million weekly admissions had doubled to over l00 million. For the next generation, movies, often under the pressure of religious groups (in 1934, at the request of the Catholic Church's Legion of Decency, a stricter Production Code went into effect, especially on choice of subjects), became the most formative influence on American society, and the chief projector of the American Way of Life abroad.

This influence was reinforced by an artist of rare genius, Walt Disney (1901—66), who was also a showman and entrepreneur of unusual force. He came from Illinois, where his father was a farmer and small—time contractor. Disney had a strict Protestant upbringing, against which he rebelled, only to fall back into its assumptions as soon as he became a successful businessman. He did imitations of Hollywood comedians on the halls, then went into cartoon—animals in Kansas. Once in Hollywood, he created Mickey Mouse, a `little man' moral figure, and *The Three Little Pigs*, an anti—Depression stimulant, which presented determined hard work as the only protection from the Big Bad Wolf of despair. Like all great children's artists, Disney moralized the animal kingdom, but he Americanized it too, using the resources of high—technology animation, which he revolutionized and extended. His creative ideas were so commercially successful that they became cliches, like all great artistic innovations. Recent research has demonstrated that Disney's more adventurous concepts were discarded because of consumer resistance—*Fantasia*, the most innovative of the feature—length animated movies he drew and produced from 1938 onwards, was an exception—but his willingness to stick close to popular taste enormously increased the force of his moral impact. By weaving animal characters into a moral tale, which was itself underpinned by the Judeo—Christian message of the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount—Disney invented a new form of miracle play, a quasi—religious subculture which translated morally based fantasy into screen reality.

In 1951 Disney decided to give his two—dimensional message a third by designing, on a huge scale, the first Disneyland, which opened at Anaheim, California, in 1955. The inspiration for this was the architectural fantasies of Southern California we have already described, but Disney wove them into an optimistic tale about America, in which children took a real—life journey in a little train whose first stop was Main Street, USA, and last Tomorrowland, USA, all American history being briefly covered in the process. These three—dimensional experiences for children proliferated in America and were exported abroad. Building on these creations, in 1965 Disney conceived yet another extension of the concept to what he called `our Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow,' a playland area for children and adults, covering 47 square miles of what was Florida swampland near Orlando, run by 40,000 employees and incorporating fantasies from all over the world, from alps covered in fake snow to Polynesian beaches with fake rollers—Walt Disney World. It was opened in 1971, five years after his death, and again was duplicated in America and elsewhere.

If the commercial system, and its manifestations such as Hollywood family movies and Disney's animated all—American bestiary, were homogenizing the inhabitants of the United States and prodding them onto the gentle slope of upward mobility, there was another force growing up in

American society which was beckoning them, for the first time, in the opposite direction. This development has been so important, and is simultaneously so uncharacteristic of what America had hitherto stood for, and yet so emblematic of what America is now becoming, that it merits a little treatment in detail. When visitors from Europe and Asia began to come to the United States in considerable numbers, not as immigrants but as visitors, just after World War One, they came essentially in search of novelty—and they found it. There was so much home—grown novelty already sprouting that no one noticed European blossoms shouting for attention. This was new. In the 1880s, Oscar Wilde's exhibitionism had paid off handsomely. By 1920, when the Surrealist leader, Salvador Dali, arrived to advertise himself, and walked down Fifth Avenue carrying a four—foot loaf under his arm, no one took the slightest notice. `In America,' he sadly observed, `Surrealism is invisible for all is larger than life.' He added, `Each American image I would sniff with the voluptuousness with which you welcome the inaugural fragrances of a sensational meal.' By the 1920s, indeed, America had much to shock, enthrall and fascinate—mass motoring, screaming advertising, endless movies, records sold by millions, twenty—four—hour radio (the new word which America, followed by the world, was adopting to replace the staid English term `wireless'). It had the `funnies.' It had photojournalism of a kind Europe had not yet experienced. But, above all, it had jazz. When Arthur Schnabel toured America and was asked what sheet music he wanted to take back, he said, `Jazz.' When Darius Milhaud was asked on his return what kind of music America had, he said, `Jazz.' By the 1920s, in countless different ways, America was pulling the world behind it in the mass arts just as France, in the early modern period, had pulled the world behind it in the fine arts. But jazz was the exciting, creative element in this mass conquest, perhaps the only one that nonAmerican creators respected. So what did it mean?

Jazz entered at a tangent an American musical tradition which was rich in song but barren of much else. The Pilgrim Fathers and other settlers, being not only Protestants but Puritans, had no access to the English polyphonic musical tradition, which was maintained almost entirely by Catholics like Byrd, Gibbons, Dowland, Bull, Wilbe, and Weelkes. The Indian tradition was not attractive, at any rate according to Captain John Smith's description:

> For their musicke they use a thick Cane, on which they pipe as on a Recorder. For their warres they have a great deepe platter of wood. They cover the mouth thereof with a skinne, at each corner they tie a walnut, which meeting on the backside near the bottome, with a small rope they twitch them together till it be so tough and stiffe, that they may beat upon as upon a drumme. But their chief instruments are Rattles made of small gourds or Pumeons shels. Of these they have a Base, Tenor, Countertenor, Meane and Treble. These mingled with their voyces, sometimes twentie or thirtie together, make such a noise as would rather affright than delight any man.

By contrast black slaves were encouraged by the planters to express themselves in music. Whereas the visual and dramatic arts were banned as distracting, work—songs actually increased production. Their quills and pipes and possibly the banjo they brought from Africa. They proved extraordinarily skillful at using battered folk—fiddles, which took the lead melodic role later assumed by the clarinet, and making instruments out of pickaxes, washboards, knives, cans, and other percussive instruments. Negro spirituals came from European hymns, not from Africa, though some of the themes of the songs may have been African.'

From this unpromising mixture came two distinct but connected American traditions. The first, less pervasive, was white. Stephen Foster (1826—64) came from Pittsburgh (later

Cincinnati) and was a mother—dominated, introspective, nostalgic genius, who died of drink at thirty—eight. From the English ballad, the French waltz, and Italian opera he wove a music folk—art of innocence and plaintive memory which at its best—'I dream of Jeanie with the light—brown hair' (1854)—is as good as a Schubertian song. His `Ethiopian Songs' are based not on Negro spirituals but on the songs of the Christy Minstrel Show, the first minstrel being Daddy Rice, who toured the frontier settlements around 1830 with a parody—imitation of an aged rheumaticky negro from the Mississippi. The vogue climaxed just before the Civil War, dying with it. Foster's songs—'My Old Kentucky Home,' `The Old Folks at Home,' `The Camptown Races,' are the best—form its epitaph. His last song, `Beautiful Dreamer,' adumbrates Tin Pan Alley. Foster's natural successor, also from Pittsburgh, was Ethelbert Nevi n (1862—1901), a polyglot mixture himself who, in turn, added various elements that came to his hand to produce brilliant songs like `Mighty Lak a Rose' and `The Rosary.' His seventy songs are highly professional: indeed it can be said of the 19th century American composers at they brought to popular music a new kind of professionalism, which incorporated their highly sophisticated approach to dancing. The beat was transcendent. This was particularly marked in the work of the third outstanding melodist, John Philip So, born in Washington, the son of a Spanish trombonist who played in the US Marine Band. So added USA to his name, making Sousa (1854—1932). He trained himself to become the world's greatest writer of marches, evolving a superb professionalism from his natural braggadocio, exhibitionism, and passion to entertain. A march,' he wrote,

> Speaks to the fundamental rhythm in the human organization, and is answered. A march stimulates every center of activity, awakens the imagination ... But a march must be good. It must be as free from padding as a marble statue. Every line must be carved with unerring skill—once padded, it ceases to be a march. There is no form of composition wherein the harmonic structure must be more clear—cut. The whole process is an exacting one. There must be a melody which appeals to the musical and unmusical alike. There must be no confusion in the counterpoint ... A march must make a man with a wooden leg step out.

Sousa was characteristically American in that he combined artistic professionalism, commercial skills, and a strong propensity to promote the feel—good factor. `The Washington Post,' `The Stars and Stripes Forever,' `The Liberty Bell,' *El Capitan*, `The Power and the Glory:' these are animal—uplift works. Sousa had his own band from 1892 until his death and recruited the trimmings of ceremonial marching, the twirling masses, the bounding girls in high hats, which became an integral part of it, celebrating the sheer delight in disciplined physical activity which is as American as (in another mood) Foster's nostalgia.

All these forms of American music were eclectic. But jazz and the blues were the most eclectic of all in their historical origins. They were a product of the one aspect of the melting—pot in which blacks participated fully—sound (and behind the sound, sentiment). Blues in one sense derived directly from slave—work, from the `field hollers,' but indirectly from western European ballads, the Bible—inspired spirituals, and the hot gospel—shouts of the camp—meeting. Jazz and rags were something different: they were mockery, criticism, covert protests against the triumphalism of the white man's world. The origin of the word `rag' or `ragging' lies in English schoolboy slang—it is the defiance of authority by misbehavior. Just as American idiom and slang achieved its impact and acquired its character by ragging British standard English, so negro American ragged middle—class Anglo—American English. Americans were

fond of turning nouns into verbs, something the British thought uncivilized. Mencken, in his book *The American Language*, called it the greatest single characteristic of the American idiom—slum, hog, itemize, burglarize, bug, thumb, goose: all usages which once made Englishmen bristle with outrage (and still do in some cases). The blacks verbalized to an even greater extent—confidence, uglying away, feature, and so on. The charm, the defiance, lay in the flouting of convention.

The piano rag was a music version of this charm—through—defiance. Before the Civil War, blacks rarely had access to pianos. But they could sing. Their status gave them an instinct for parody. Thus Bellini's *La Somnambula*, an 1837 hit in New York, was burlesqued or ragged as *The Roof Scrambler*. Black amateur musicians jazzed or ragged the classics by altering the beat or the stress, as well as the words. Blacks proved themselves brilliant at playing with rhythms to produce ironic versions of music in the Western tradition. The beat, the rhythm was the key. The black singer John Bubbles, with `Rhythms for Sale,' made the point: `All the world wants rhythm bad / Blacks are mighty glad / Cause they got rhythm for sale.' From the 1860s onwards, blacks learned the piano, often on battered, second—hand models. As the British had discovered as far back as the I790s, the piano was a consumer durable which was extraordinarily well adapted to mass production. As early as the 1830s, America was buying and making pianos in vast quantities. Virtuosi pianists were the most popular visitorsLeopold de Meyer in the 1840s, Sigismond Thalberg ('Old Arpeggio') in the 1850s, and then in quick succession Anton Rubinstein, Hans von Bulow, Josef Hofmann, Ferruccio Busoni, Ignacy Paderewski: these were the idols. In the two decades 1870—90, purchases of pianos increased 1.6 times faster even than the rapidly rising population, and in the 1890s the increase was 5.6 times; even this was beaten in the decade 1900—10, when it rose to 6.2 times. In the peak year, 1909, 3364,595 pianos were sold in the US. `There is probably no other country in the world,' wrote one music scholar in 1904, `where piano—playing is so widespread as in America.' The playing on the piano of classical works was the epitome of Victorian values, involving hard work, producing moral and cultural uplift, and stressing domesticity. In its proper usage, the piano was overwhelmingly a feminine instrument. In 1922, for instance, women formed 85 percent of music students and 75 percent of concert audiences—the piano being the center of both activities. Thus male abuse of the piano to produce rags was a protest against domestic discipline and feminine dominance, just as black ragging of white tunes was an act of defiance.

There was also the question of speed. African songs were slow. The negro spirituals of the Deep South were slow. When the blacks came north after the Civil War, they needed to speed up in response to American hustle. Jazz and rag was their answer. Ragtime was percussive as well as fast—hence the gangster term for a submachine—gun, a Chicago Piano. When the blacks came north and started to use pianos on a large scale, they made them the equivalent of an African drum. They stressed particularly the `nigger keys,' the five blacks, the African pentatonic or five—note mode as opposed to the `white keys' of the Western diatonic scale. Ragging was syncopating, putting the stress off the beat or onto the weak beat. It was genuine melting—pot because the left—hand bass performed a steady 2/4 Western—style march time while the right—hand treble did the Afro—syncopation. (It is interesting that Sousa sometimes ragged his marches in performance, though never on record; so no one could prove he had `sunk so low.') It is possible that the piano rag was a deliberate attempt by some gifted blacks to make a distinctive contribution to `artistic' music and was designed to be notated. It may have been related to the black dance—form of the cake—walk, with an element of parody, and signified a conscious black attempt to get their own back on white classicism. Scott Joplin, greatest of the

piano—raggers, was a sophisticated musician well read in classical music, who even tried to compose a rag—opera, *Treemonisha*, but it failed. Joplin wrote down all his rags. The first accurate description of ragtime dates from 1885, and at the Chicago Fair of 1893 a group of blacks astonished audiences by playing it. The first sheet music of rag was published two years later, about ten years after it became a form, and in contrast to blues, which were not written down for at least half a century after they were first sung.

Rag developed in Northern cities like Chicago and on the borders in places like St Louis and Louisville. Jazz, a melting—pot music from fifeand—drum bands, spirituals and black string bands, with rag as a dash of spice, came from Mobile, Alabama, and above all from New Orleans, especially from its Storyville red—light district. These Gulf towns were egregiously multiethnic and multiracial—always had been—and it is impossible to identify all the various historic strands which went into this close—woven mesh. Ferdinand `Jelly Roll' Morton on the piano and Charles `Buddy' Bolden on the cornet—performed at funerals, house—parties, and clubs. It was usual for a New Orleans funeral band to perform `straight' on the way to the cemetery, then rag, syncopate, and burlesque on the way back to the party. Joe `King' Oliver and Louis Armstrong—both trumpeters—also came from New Orleans, taking their music in time to Chicago and fame. Edward `Duke' Ellington, by contrast, came from Washington DC and moved to New York to work in the Harlem Cotton Club. In their origins at least, neither rag nor jazz was very far from the honky—tonk or even the brothel, and their loud, percussive characteristics evolved from the need to be heard over the smoky hubbub. `Jazz' was a black term for sexual intercourse; so was 'eagle—rocking' and `boogie—woogie,' a black variation of 'humpy—pumpy.' All this was not incompatible with a religious background too. `T—Bone' Walker was quoted as saying, `The blues come a lot from the church. The first time I heard a boogiewoogie piano was the first time I went to church.'

To upright, middle—class American women it all sounded mighty suspect. The suffragists and feminists, led by Carrie Chapman Catt (1859—1947), president of the National American Women's Suffrage Association, were particularly outraged, on behalf of women performers, at what they termed the `rape' of the piano by the raggers, who played `nigger whorehouse music,' aided, increasingly, by `clever, unscrupulous Jews.' The National Federation of Women's Clubs insisted they would wrest American music from `the hands of the infidel foreigner' and `black slum—dwellers.' At their insistence, the American Federation of Musicians (1914) pledged they would not play ragtime. The *Musical Observer* of September 1914 wrote that there was no room for ragtime `in Christian homes where purity of morals are [sic] stressed.' In August 1921 the *Ladies Home Journal* published an article asking `Does Jazz Put the Sin in Syncopation?' Militant women linked the spread of 'negro music' to the rise in illegitimacy rates. There was a strong feminist element in the opposition to jazz, linked to anti—semitism, xenophobia, and opposition to unrestricted immigration. In New York there was a spectacular increase in the number of professional actresses from 780 in 1870 to 19,905 in 1921. They were strongly feminist. Thus the great stage star Lillian Russell (1861—1922), daughter of the pioneer suffragist Cynthia Russell, who started the Women's Club Movement in Chicago, was not merely a beauty but a brain too. One New York newspaper remarked, `The beauty of Lillian Russell is as much an institution as Niagara Falls or the Brooklyn Bridge,' and they instanced her, with her pink—and—white looks and direct descent from the Pilgrim Fathers, as evidence that America was producing `a race of queens.' Though herself notable for debts, multiple husbands, and still more numerous lovers, she campaigned for New York mayor in 1915 on a

morality platform linked to strict immigration laws—'Our melting—pot has become too crowded,' as she put it.'

Feminine opposition to the black element in the new music led to considerable humbug and downright rewriting of history by white artists who adopted it. One example was Irving Berlin (1888—1989), the greatest white ragger. Born Israel Baline in Russia, the son of a cantor, he crossed the Atlantic in 1893 steerage with five brothers, with eight suitcases between them, and went to live in Cherry Street, the worst part of the Lower East Side. He attended school for only five years, then at twelve went on the streets and into dives to sing for money. He survived to compose an enormous treasure—house of 355 hits, jealously guarded by his own publishing company (1914). He burlesqued Paderewski, the `long—haired genius,' with his exaggerated hand—gestures at the piano, and he ragged America's welcome to Verdi in `Watch Your Step.' His `Alexander's Ragtime Band,' a work which made him `King of Ragtime' (1912), was fundamentally a straight march but its lyrics were ragged—Berlin found you could rag (or `slang') a song by syncopating its words and shifting the emphasis on to the weaker beat. Berlin denied the black origin of his music. He argued that Jews had been part of Broadway and New York pop culture since the 1850s, whereas the blacks were post—Civil War newcomers. `Our popular songwriters,' he claimed, `... are not negroes but of pure white blood, many of Russian ancestry.' He came from a parallel anti—authoritarian tradition of mockery, of despised Jews v. mastergoys. Yiddish was an alien—pop version of High German in the same way as black English was an alien—pop version of standard AmericanEnglish. His first paid job was as a `singing waiter' at Nigger Mike's in New York's Chinatown (the owner was a Russian Jew, posing as a black), where he did parody acts as an Italian singer, a Jewish one, a German, an Irish, and a black. All was elliptical, inverted, upside down, burlesqued. He called himself Cooney. When he got to the top he kicked away any black rung in the ladder whereby he had climbed.

A similar case was Al Jolson, another cantor's son, born Asa Yelson near St Petersburg in the early 1880s. Exceptionally nervous for a professional, he was told by a black: 'Yous'd be much funnier, boss, if you blacked your face like mine. People always laugh at the black man.' He followed this advice and became `the blackface with the Grand Opera voice,' whose 1925 movie, *The Jazz Singer*, made him a great star. On Broadway, went the adage, you started black or ethnic and became steadily whiter and more Waspy as you succeeded. The classic case of this ascent was Fred Astaire (1899—1987), a second—generation immigrant from Omaha, Nebraska, born Frederick Austerlitz, who started as a black—style dancer and gradually turned it into what Mencken called `high—toned shindig.' Astaire went into the new black—into—white style of crooning when the electric microphone arrived in 1925, and he transformed himself from a black Jewish song—and—dance artiste into a white—tie—and—tails Fifth—Avenue—Park—Lane sophisticate. That involved ladder—kicking too. The most blatant of the whites—only jazz musicians was the aptly named Paul Whiteman (1890—1967), a hugely greedy man weighing over 300 pounds who originally played the viola in the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, then came to New York to make himself the `King of Jazz.' His first (1920) hit record was 'Avalon,' a pop version of an aria from Puccini's *Tosca*, and he followed the familiar path of burlesquing, sending up, playing for laughs. He engaged in an elaborate and highly successful effort to make jazz respectable by staging a big concert at the Aeolian Hall on February 11, 1924, at which the *Rhapsody in Blue* by George Gershwin (1898—1937) received its first performance. But he insisted that jazz was a white invention, his band was all—white, and in his book *Jazz* (1926) he does not mention blacks at all.

Ultimately the attempt to write blacks out of the script was a total failure. Indeed, even in the early 1920s, blacks were succeeding in getting some of the credit and the limelight. Black bands were welcome in Paris, as was Florence Mills in London. *The Plantation Review* (1922), *Dixie to Broadway* (1924), and *The Blackbirds* (1926) were New York hits. And Josephine Baker, after her 1925 success in Paris with *La Revue Negre*, in which she did a bare—breasted *danse sauvage*, returned to triumphs in America too. As early as 1922, in the Ziegfeld Follies, Gilda Gray sang `It's Getting Dark on Broadway,' with its punchline, `You must black up to be the latest rage.' What was discovered in the 1920s, for the first time, was that black music had a lure of its own precisely because it was black, and that downward mobility was an important element in the new art—form. Going to nightclubs and joints where jazz was played was one way in which upper—class debutantes themselves ragged society dances they were expected to attend. The Broadway music publisher Edward Marks made the point: `The best songs come from the gutter.' Talking ungrammatical English was a form of social protest against established mores. Irving Berlin knew when to use correct English, as in his `God Bless America;' he used the her kind, as in 'Ain't You Going,' for deliberate ragging. It was one ofthe ironies of history that intensely upwardly mobile figures like himself, coming from nowhere to become multimillionaires and pillars of the establishment (he eloped with the `society rose' Ellin Mackay in 1926 and spent the last decades of his life assiduously tracking down any infringement of his royalties), were those who also, when it suited their commercial purposes, encouraged the taste for downward mobility among the young. A similar tendency was observable among black writers, such as Langston Hughes (1902—67), poet, playwright, novelist, and journalist, and star of what came to be called the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 1930s: he infuriated the conventionally upwardly mobile black middle class by deliberately moving his idiom downmarket. Black reviewers called him the `Sewer Dweller,' for pretending to write poetry which was in fact `trash reeking of the gutter.'

It is important to grasp that downward mobility was, initially, only a tiny fracture in the smooth monolith of America's upwardly mobile society. Jazz, for instance, was an elite taste in the 1920s. Not until it was simplified, purged, and made respectable by the white bands of Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey (becoming `swing' in the process) did it begin to conquer the masses from 1935 onwards. Then in the 1940s came bop, with black players like Charlie Parker (tenor sax), Dizzy Gillespie (trumpet), Thelonious Monk (piano), and singers like Ella Fitzgerald, doing bebop. There followed 1950s cool, hard bop, soul jazz, rock in the 1960s, and in the 1970s blends of jazz and rock dominated by electronic instruments. And all the time pop music was crowding in to envelop the various styles and traditions in the phantasmagoria of commercial music geared to the taste of countless millions of easily manipulated but increasingly affluent young people. And, from the worlds of jazz and pop, the drug habit spread to the masses as the most accelerated form of downward mobility of all.`

All this was a cloud no bigger than a child's hand in the 1920s, where critical attention was focussed more on the rise of the American musical, itself a melting—pot amalgam of the Viennese operetta, the rench boulevard music—play, the English Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera and music hall—*The Beggar's Opera* of 1728 was the ultimate ancestor—plus the all—American ingredients of burlesque, minstrelshow, vaudeville (and jazz), becoming in the process a completely new and hugely attractive art—form. The prewar talents of Berlin and Jerome Kern were joined, after the end of the war, by a host of newcomers, some of them close to the genius level: in addition to Gershwin, Richard Rogers, Howard Dietz, Cole Porter, Vincent Youmans, Oscar Hammerstein, Lorenz Hart, and E. Y. Harburg. Together they brought the American

musical to full flower: Gershwin's *Lady Be Good!*, the first mature example, opened on December 1, 1924 in the Liberty Theater, starring Fred Astaire and his sister Adele. It was an outstanding event of a Broadway season that included forty musicals, such as Kern's *Sitting Pretty*, Irvin Berlin's *Music Box Review*, Youmans' *Lollypop*, *The Student Prince*, and Sissie and Blake's *Chocolate Dandies*. Twenties New York did not quite have the cultural reclame of Weimar Germany at this time but it was the place where the native creator had the widest range of opportunities and where the expatriate artist was most likely to find the freedom, the means, and the security to express himself.

The keynote of the 1920s musical was joy, springing from an extraordinary exuberance in the delight of being alive and American. The central paradox of the 1920s—probably the most enjoyable decade in American history—was that America, having voluntarily saddled itself with Prohibition, took to partying on a scale never seen before. Ernest Hemingway (1898—1961), who fought his way to the top of the young writers' league during the decade, coined the phrase, soon universal: `Have a drink.' The Twenties also saw the emergence into open society of a secret drink, first made in California (probably San Francisco) in the 1860s, of gin, sweet vermouth, and angostura. In 1920s New York it was made with minute quantities of dry vermouth and rechristened the Dry Martini. Bernard de Voto called it `the supreme American gift to world culture.' H. L. Mencken thought it `the only American invention as perfect as a sonnet.' If not sonnets, then ingenious verses were written to it, including a notable one by Ogden Nash and a quatrain by the 19zos Egeria, Dorothy Parker: `I like to have a Martini / Two at the very most. / After three I'm under the table. / After four I'm under the host.'

Warren Harding did not drink Martinis, however; he drank whiskey. And he chewed tobacco. As Thomas Edison put it, 'Harding is all right—any man who chews tobacco is all right.' (This was said with general male approval. Yes; the Twenties are a long time ago now.) In his own humdrum way, Harding shared in the general joy of the time. He took the press into his confidence and, as he got to know reporters, called them by their Christian names. When he moved, he liked to surround himself with a vast traveling `family,' many invited on the spur of the moment, who occupied ten cars in his presidential train. He would asked people up to his bedroom for what he called a `snort' and twice a week he invited his intimates over for `food and action' (action meant poker). Commerce Secretary Hoover, a stuffed shirt (quite literally; he never wore anything else after 6 P.M.) was the only one who declined to play: `It irks me to see it in the White
House.'

Harding's administration was a strong and in some ways a successful one. In addition to Hoover, the Cabinet included Charles Evans Hughes as secretary of state and Andrew Mellon at the Treasury. The Cabinet list was a cross—section of upwardly mobile America: a car manufacturer, two bankers, a hotel director, the editor of a farm journal, an international lawyer, a rancher, and an engineer. It included only two professional politicians. Harding inherited from the comatose Wilson regime one of the sharpest recessions in American history. By July 1921 it was all over and the economy was booming again. Harding and Mellon had done nothing except cut government expenditure by a huge 40 percent from Wilson's peacetime level, the last time a major industrial power treated a recession by classic laissez—faire methods, allowing wages to fall to their natural level. Benjamin Anderson of Chase Manhattan was later to call it `our last natural recovery to full employment.' The cuts were not ill—considered but part of a careful plan to bring the spending of the monster state which had emerged under Wilson back under

control. The Budget and Accounting Act (1921) created a Bureau of the Budget, to subject authorizations to systematic central scrutiny and control. Its first director, Charles Dawes, said in 1922 that, before Harding, `everyone did as they damn well pleased,' Cabinet members were 'comanchees,' Congress `a nest of cowards.' Then Harding `waved the axe and said that anybody who didn't cooperate his head would come off.' The result was `velvet for the taxpayer.'

Yet Harding usually emerges from polls of American citizens and professional historians alike as the least respected of the presidents. He illustrates the adage, demonstrated under Grant and proved again and again in the second half of the loth century: `A president cannot be too careful.' Harding was careless in his choice of friends and colleagues. Or, to put it another way, he was generous and unsuspicious. The only specific charge of dishonesty brought against him personally was that the sale of the *Marion Star* was a fix. This was decisively refuted in court, the two men who brought suit collecting $100,000 in libel damages. But Harding made one colossal error of judgment: appointing Albert Fall, the florid Senator for New Mexico, his Interior Secretary. In believing Fall honest he was in good, or at least in numerous company. The Senator sported a handlebar mustache and wore a flowing black cape and broad—brimmed stetson, the very picture of old Southern—Western `normalcy.' He was so popular that, when his nomination went before the Senate for approval, it was confirmed by immediate acclamation, the only time in American history a Cabinet member has received such a vote of confidence. Harding's second error was believing his Attorney—General, his old Ohio campaign—manager Harry Daugherty, who promised the President he would screen him from the influence—peddlers who swarmed up from his home state. `I know who the crooks are, and I want to stand between Harding and them,' was Daugherty's boast—which proved an idle one.

The result was a series of blows which came in quick succession from early 1923. In February Harding discovered that Charles Forbes, director of the Veterans Bureau, had been selling off government medical supplies at very low prices. Harding summoned him to the White House, shook him `as a dog would a rat,' and shouted, `You doublecrossing bastard!' Forbes fled to Europe and resigned, February 15. On March 4 Albert Fall resigned. It was later established he had received a total of $400,000 in return for granting favorable leases of government oilfields at Elk Hills in California and Salt Creek (Teapot Dome) in Wyoming. Fall was eventually jailed for a year in 1929. His leases later turned out well for America, since they involved building vital pipelines and installations at Pearl Harbor. But that was not apparent at the time and Fall's exposure was a disaster for Harding. It was quickly followed by the guilty suicide of Charles Cramer, counsel for the Veterans Bureau.

Finally on May 29 Harding forced himself to see a crony of Daugherty's, Jess Smith, who together with other Ohioans had been selling government favors from what became known as `the little green house [no. 1625] on K Street.' The `Ohio Gang,' as the group was soon called, had nothing to do with Harding and it was never legally established that even Daugherty shared their loot (when tried in 1926—7 he refused to take the stand, but was acquitted). But after Harding confronted Smith with his crimes, the wretched man shot himself the following day and this second suicide had a deplorable effect on the President's morale. According to William Allen White (not always a reliable witness), Harding told him: `I can take care of my enemies all right. But my damned friends, my God—damn friends, White, they're the ones who keep me walking the floors nights.'

Given time, Harding would certainly have managed to stabilize the situation and refute the rumors of guilt by association, as have several presidents since. For his own hands were

completely clean, so far as the latest historical research has been able to establish. But the following month he left for a trip to Alaska and the West Coast. Already a prime candidate for a heart attack (autopsy showed his heart was badly enlarged), he tried to exorcise the scandals in the minds of the people by frantic activity. In a Seattle motorcade he `pumped his arm up and down for hours as he tipped his hat,' straining his heart still further. He collapsed as his train neared San Francisco but, unwilling to disappoint people, he insisted on donning morning dress and walked unaided up the steps of the Palace Hotel, to the cheers of the crowd. As soon as he reached his room he fell head—first across the bed, where he died three days later of what the doctors called `apoplexy,' which was in fact a massive coronary. Harding's funeral train moving east was the occasion of extraordinary demonstrations of public affection for the man who, unlike Taft and Wilson, `looked like a president.' In Cheyenne immense crowds stood in a dust—storm, in Chicago they filled the freight—yards until the train could not move: Harding was the kind of president American people of all classes love—kind, genial, decent, ordinary, human, one of them.

The deconstruction of the real Harding and his reconstruction as a crook, a philanderer, and a sleazy no—good was an exemplary exercise in false historiography. It began in 1924 with a series of articles in the *New Republic* by its imaginative and violently anti—business editor, Bruce Bliven. He created the myth that the Ohio Gang, run by Daugherty, had deliberately recruited Harding in 1912 as a front man as part of a long—term conspiracy to hand over America to Andrew Mellon and Big Business. It now seems there was no evidence whatsoever for this invention, and it is not surprising that Bliven went on, in the 1930s, to become a credulous propagandist for the Communist—run Popular Front. Then in 1926, a novel, Revelry, describes a guilty president who poisons himself to escape scandals and exposure. It took in the disapproving Hoover, who always thought he would have made a better president than Harding. He read it in manuscript and told a friend it described `many things which are not known.'

The novel's success in turn prompted Nan Britton, an Ohio girl, daughter of a Marion doctor, to publish in 1927 *The President's Daughter*, asserting she had had a baby girl by Harding in 1919. She claimed that she had been seduced in Harding's then office in the Senate, and that their affair continued, Harding writing her many letters. Even at the time she failed to produce these incriminating letters. Recent research has established that she was the local `fast' girl, whose embarrassing crush on Harding had led to trouble for the unsuspecting man—including blackmail—though it is likely he was unable completely to resist his `stalker.' The child did exist, but the father may have been one of many men, and Britton's descriptions of later hotel assignations with Harding have been disproved by research into hotel registers.

The attacks on Harding continued with the publication in 1928 of *Masks in a Pageant* by the inventive William Allen White, who repeated the conspiracy theory in this book and again, ten years later, in his `life' of Coolidge, *A Puritan in Babylon*. In 1930 a former FBI agent, Gaston Means, produced the bestselling *The Strange Death of President Harding*, portraying wholly imaginary drunken orgies with chorus girls at the K Street house, with Harding prominent in the `action.' The book has now been shown to be a catalog of ghostwritten lies. Equally damaging was the 1933 memoir by TR's daughter, Alice Roosevelt Longworth, *Crowded Hours*, which presented Harding's White House as a speakeasy: `The air heavy with tobacco smoke, trays with bottles containing every imaginable brand of whiskey stood about, cards and poker chips ready at hand—a general atmosphere of waistcoat unbuttoned, feet on the desk and the spittoon alongside ... Harding was not a bad man. He was just a slob.' It now emerges that Mrs Longworth, notorious for her sharp tongue and amusing *esprit d'escalier*, bitterly resented the

fact that Harding, rather than her bibulous husband, Speaker of the House Nicholas Longworth, got to the White House.

To cap it all, an apparently careful work of research by a *New York Post* writer, Samuel Hopkins Adams, *The Incredible Era: the Life and Times of Warren Gamaliel Harding* (1939), welded together all the inventions and myths, plus a few fibs of his own, into a solid orthodoxy. By this time, the notion of Harding as the demon king of the Golden Calf Era had become the received version of events not only in popular books like Frederick Lewis Allen's *Only Yesterday* but in standard academic history—though even in that category some reputable scholars, like Allan Nevins, have now been shown to have had personal scores to settle against Harding. When in 1964 the Harding Papers (which had not been burned, as alleged) were opened to scholars, no truth at all was found in any of the myths, though it emerged that Harding, a pathetically shy man with women, had had a sad and touching friendship with the wife of a Marion store—owner before his presidency. The Babylonian image was a fantasy, and in all essentials Harding had been an honest and shrewd president, prevented by his early death from overwork from becoming, perhaps, a great one. The experience should encourage the historian to look more closely at other accepted presidential myths.

Harding's successor, his Vice—President Calvin Coolidge (1872—1933), came not from a small town of the old Midwest but from rustic Vermont, a district even more closely associated with the pristine values of the American `City on a Hill.' Vermont was the only New England state without a coastline, and therefore largely untouched by the immoral infiltration of commerce. It was the first state to join the original thirteen, in 1791, and it was by no means unprogressive. In fact its state Constitution was the first to abolish slavery and establish universal manhood suffrage. But it was, and is, rural conservative. In Coolidge's day it lived chiefly by dairy farming and he was brought up on a farm, near the little town of Plymouth. His father, Colonel Coolidge of the militia, worked the farm himself. This was by no means unusual then: in some ways America was still a farmer's country. Indeed, when Vice—President Coolidge was summoned to the White House in August 1923, he was at his father's farm, spending two weeks of his vacation helping to get in the hay, swinging a scythe, handling a pitchfork, and driving a two—horse `hitch.' This was not done for a photocall either, for no photos were taken. Coolidge never had a press secretary in his life. He would not have dreamed of calling a reporter by his first name, as Harding did, and no reporter, so far as is known, was ever welcome at the Coolidge farm until the presidency descended on him.

The scene when the news penetrated to Plymouth on the night on August 2 that the local boy was now the thirtieth President was indeed arcadian. There was no phone at the farm, the nearest being 2 miles down the hill. The Coolidge family were awakened by a Post Office messenger pounding on the door. He brought two telegrams: one from Harding's secretary giving official notification of the President's death, the second from the Attorney—General advising Coolidge to qualify immediately for the office by taking the oath. So the oath was copied out and Coolidge's father, being a notary public, administered it, by the light of a kerosene lamp, for there was no electricity at the house. It was just a tiny farmhouse sitting—room, with an airtight wood stove, an old—fashioned walnut desk, a few chairs, and a marble—topped table on which stood the old family Bible, open. As he read the last words of the oath, the younger Coolidge placed his hand on the book and said, with great solemnity, `So help me God.'

Coolidge was not all that remote from our times. He was born in July I872, a few weeks after Bertrand Russell, whom the author of this work used to know well. That summer, Verdi's *Aida* was the hit opera and George Eliot's *Middlemarch* was the most talked—about novel. Coolidge

saw himself as go—ahead in his own way. He liked to quote Sydney Smith: `It is a grand thing for a man to find his own line and keep to it—you go so much faster on your own rail.' He declined to follow his father into farming and chose his own line of law and public service—nor did he seek a partnership in an established firm but put out his own sign in Northampton, Massachusetts, at the age of twenty—five, `Calvin Coolidge, Attorney and Counselor—at—Law.' Two years later he took his first step on the political ladder, as a Republican city councilman, followed by election as city solicitor, two terms in the state legislature, a spell as mayor of Northampton, followed by service in the state Senate as president and then two terms as governor.

Like his predecessor Harding, only more systematically and of set purpose and belief, Coolidge was a minimalist politician. He thought the essence of the republic was not so much democracy itself as the rule of law, and that the prime function of government was to uphold and enforce it. Of course government had an enabling function too. As a city administrator, he took steps to enable local farmers to provide citizens with an adequate supply of fresh milk at competitive prices. He took enormous trouble in supervising railroad Bills to enable the companies to provide reliable and cheap public transport in Massachusetts. He was accomplished at both city and state finance, paying off debt, accumulating surpluses, and so, as a result, raising the salaries of state teachers and attracting the best. Examination of his record in Massachusetts both as legislator and as governor shows in detail that he was not a 'property—is—always—right man.' Quite the contrary. He loathed the pressure—group and lobby system of powerful property interests. He was a 'the—law—is—always—right' man. As governor he made an important statement on the freedom of the elected individual to ignore bullying by the interests and the media. He said: `We have too much legislating by clamor, by tumult, by pressure. Representative government ceases when outside influence of any kind is substituted for the judgment of the representative.' Voters have the right to vote, but a representative, having been voted into office, must use his judgment. Edmund Burke had said the same thing 150 years before. Coolidge added: `This does not mean that the opinion of constituents is to be ignored. It is to be weighed most carefully, for the representative must represent, but his oath provides that it must be "faithfully and agreeably to the rules and regulations of the Constitution and laws." Opinions and instructions do not outmatch the Constitution. Against it they are void.' For a state like Massachusetts to pass a law providing for the manufacture of light beer and wines, the so—called 'Two—and—a—Half—Per—Cent Beer Bill,' in defiance of federal Prohibition, was an insult to law. He called it indeed `nullification,' the unlawful course of the rebellious South, in defiance of the Constitution, which he had no alternative as governor but to veto. `The binding obligation of obedience [to the law] against personal desire,' he said, was the essence of civilized, constitutional government, without which `all liberty, all security is at an end' and `force alone will prevail.' `Can those entrusted with the gravest authority,' he continued, `set any example save that of the sternest obedience to law?'

An absolute adherence to the principle of the rule of law, and a meticulous attention to its details, was what distinguished Coolidge's successful handling of the 1919 Boston Police Strike, an event which brought him to the attention of the entire nation. Coolidge's conduct was marked by a willingness to take on any group in society, however powerful—in this case the American Federation of Labor—in defense of the law, by an insistence that the duly constituted authority, in this case the Boston Police Commissioner, be left to exercise his judgment and powers until such time as he publicly confessed that the situation was beyond his control, and then by an equal willingness to exercise the full constitutional powers of the governorship, including his

rights as the commander—in—chief of the State Guard, which was called out in its entirety. The policy was minimalist until both the facts of the case and the state of public opinion demanded maximalist measures, which had been carefully and secretly prepared before and were then put into action immediately and in full. It was also backed by a well—formulated and easily grasped expression of political philosophy: `There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, at any place or at any time.' Coolidge's handling of this dangerous strike, at a time when public order was under threat virtually all over the world, became a model for any chief executive to follow at either state or federal level. It was evidently seen as such by both the political class and the whole nation at the time, and prepared the way for Coolidge's nomination as vicepresidential candidate the following year.

However, though propelled to national attention by the vigorous and unhesitating exercise of gubernatorial authority, Coolidge was anxious to reassure the nation that such state intervention was for extreme emergencies only, and that in normal times minimal government must *be* the norm. In his acceptance speech, indeed, he spoke of `restoring the Lincoln principles' by insisting on `a government of the people, for the people and by the people.' He made it absolutely clear what he meant by this: `The chief task which lies before us is to repossess the people of their government and their property.'

Coolidge's minimalism was not just an expression of a political philosophy, though it was certainly that. As a prosperous nation with a largely self—regulating economy and protected by great natural defenses, America was in a position to follow the advice of Lord Salisbury, who had governed Britain when Coolidge was a young man. `The country is carried comfortably down the river by the current, and the function of government is merely to put out an oar when there is any danger of its drifting into the bank.' That was the Coolidge philosophy too, but it was more than a philosophy, it was a state of mind, almost a physical compulsion. Coolidge, like the great Queen Elizabeth I of England, was a supreme exponent of masterly inactivity. But he was also, unlike that Queen, who could be talkative at times, a person who devoted much thought and a lifetime of experience to strategies of silence. He got this from his father, but whereas the Colonel was silent by instinct, Coolidge turned it into a political virtue. He rejoiced in his nickname, `Silent Cal'—it often saved him from taking steps or making statements that might prove counterproductive.

A reputation for silence was itself a form of authority. As president of the state Senate in 1914, Coolidge delivered the shortest inaugural on record. It is worth recalling. Here it is, in its entirety: `Do the day's work. If it be to protect the rights of the weak, whoever objects, do it. If it be to help a powerful corporation better to serve the people, whatever the opposition, do that. Expect to be called a standpatter, but don't be a standpatter. Expect to be called a demagogue but don't be a demagogue. Don't hesitate to be as revolutionary as science. Don't hesitate to be as reactionary as the multiplication table. Don't expect to build up the weak by pulling down the strong. Don't hurry to legislate. Give administration a chance to catch up with legislation.' Good points, well noted. Reelected without opposition, he made his second inaugural even shorter—a mere four sentences. `Conserve the firm foundations of our institutions. Do your work with the spirit of a soldier in the public service. Be loyal to the Commonwealth, and to yourselves. And be brief—above all things, be brief. '

He practiced this brevity. Often he said nothing whatever. Campaigning in 1924, he noted: `I don't recall any candidate for president that ever injured himself very much by not talking.' Or again: `The things I never say never get me into trouble.' When he finally retired he confessed that his most important rule `consists in never doing anything that someone else can do for you.'

He added: ‘Nine—tenths of a president’s callers at the White House want something they ought not to have. If you keep dead still they will run out in three or four minutes.’ Coolidge was usually silent, but slight twitches in his facial muscles spoke for him. He was described as `an eloquent listener.’

Yet when he did speak, what he said was always worth hearing. It was direct, pithy, disillusioned, unromantic, and usually true. No one in the loth century defined more elegantly the limitations of government and the need for individual endeavor, which necessarily involves inequalities, to advance human happiness. Thus: `Government cannot relieve from toil. The normal must take care of themselves. Self—government means self—support ... Ultimately, property rights and personal rights are the same thing ... History reveals no civilized people among whom there was not a highly educated class and large aggregations of wealth. Large profits mean large payrolls. Inspiration has always come from above.’ It was essential, he argued, to judge political morality not by its intentions but by its effects. Thus, in his 1925 inaugural, the key sentence was `Economy is idealism in its most practical form.’

Later that year, in an address to the New York Chamber of Commerce, Coolidge produced a classic and lapidary statement of his laissez—faire philosophy. Government and business, he said, should remain independent and separate, one directed from Washington, the other from New York. Wise and prudent men should always prevent the mutual usurpations which foolish men sought on either side. Business was the pursuit of gain but it also had a moral purpose: `the mutual organized effort of society to minister to the economic requirement of civilization ... It rests squarely on the law of service. It has for its main reliance truth and faith and justice. In its larger sense it is one of the greatest contributing forces to the moral and spiritual advancement of the race.’ That was why government had a warrant to promote its success by providing the conditions of competition within a framework of security. The job of government and law was to suppress privilege wherever it manifested itself and uphold lawful possession by providing legal remedies for all wrongs: `The prime element in the value of all property is the knowledge that its peaceful enjoyment will be publicly defended.’ Without this legal and public defense `the value of your tall buildings would shrink to the price of the waterfront of old Carthage or corner—lots in ancient Babylon.’ The more business regulated itself, he concluded, the less need there would be for government to act to insure competition. It could therefore concentrate on its twin tasks of economy and of improving the national structure within which business could increase profits and investment, raise wages and provide better goods and services at the lowest possible prices.

It was one of the characteristics of America in the 1920s that its chief executive for much of the decade preached and practiced this public philosophy. Virtually everywhere else, the trend was towards the expansion of government, greater intervention, and more power to the center. Of those who came to power at the same time as Coolidge, all the most notable were dedicated to expanding the role of the state. Mussolini, supreme in Italy from 1922, put it bluntly: `Everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state.’ Stalin, in power from 1923, began his great series of five—year plans for the entire country. The new nation—creators of the 1920s, Kemal Ataturk, President of Turkey from 1923, Chiang Kai—shek, ruler of China from 1925, Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia (1926), and Reza Shah of Persia (1925) all took government into corners of their countries it had never before penetrated. Even Poincare of France and Baldwin of Britain were, by Coolidge’s standards, rampant interventionists. Coolidge took a critical view of his masterful Cabinet colleague, Herbert Hoover, who was by training a mechanical engineer and by political instinct a social engineer. Coolidge felt that Hoover was itching to get his hands on the levers of power at the White House so that he could set the state to work to hasten the

millennium. He referred to Hoover with derision as the `Wonder Boy' and, after he had left office, said of his successor: `That man has offered me unsolicited advice for six years, all of it bad.' It is possible, though unlikely, that if Coolidge had known in advance that the interventionist Hoover was sure to take over the leadership of the Republican Party, he would have run for another term.

All that we can now say is that, on the facts, Coolidge's minimalism was justified by events. Coolidge Prosperity was huge, real, widespread though not ubiquitous, and unprecedented. It was not permanentwhat prosperity ever is? But it is foolish and unhistorical to judge it insubstantial because of what we now know followed later. At the time it was as solid as houses built, meals eaten, automobiles driven, cash spent, and property acquired. Prosperity was more widely distributed in the America of the 1920s than had been possible in any community of this size before, and it involved the acquisition, by tens of millions of ordinary families, of the elements of economic security which had hitherto been denied them throughout history. The Twenties was characterized by the longest housing boom recorded. As early as 1924, some ii ii million families had acquired their own homes, and the process was only just beginning. Automobiles gave farmers and industrial workers a mobility never enjoyed before outside the affluent classes. For the first time, many millions of working people acquired insurance—life and industrial insurance passed the l00 million mark in the 1920s—savings, which quadrupled during the decade, and a stake in the economy. An analysis of those buying fifty or more shares in one of the biggest public utility stock issues of the 1920s shows that the largest groups were, in order: housekeepers, clerks, factory workers, merchants, chauffeurs and drivers, electricians, mechanics, and foremen. Coolidge Prosperity showed that the concept of a property—owning democracy could be realized.

Nor was this new material advance essentially gross and philistine, as the popular historiography of the 1920s has it, `a drunken fiesta,' to use Edmund Wilson's phrase, or as Scott Fitzgerald put it, `the greatest, gaudiest spree in history.' Middle—class intellectuals are a little too inclined to resent poorer people acquiring for the first time material possessions, and especially luxuries, of a kind they themselves have always taken for granted. Experience shows that, in a democratic and self—improving society like the United States, when more money becomes available the first priority, both for local governments and for families, is to spend it on more and better education. That is certainly what happened in the 1920s. Between 1910 and 1930, but especially in the second half of the period, total education spending in the US rose fourfold, from $426.25 million to $2.3 billion. Spending on higher education rose fourfold too, to nearly a billion a year. Illiteracy fell from 7.7 percent to 4.3 percent. The 1920s was the age of the Book of the Month Club and the Literary Guild, of booming publishing houses and bookshops, and especially of a popular devotion to the classics. Throughout the 1920s *David Copperfield* was rated `America's favorite novel' and those voted by Americans `the ten greatest men in history' included Shakespeare, Longfellow, Dickens, and Tennyson.

It is hard to point to any aspect of culture in which the 1920s did not mark spectacular advances. By the end of it, there were over 30,000 youth orchestras in the United States. In 1924 Coolidge got himself reelected in his own right, beating not only the Democrat, John W. Davis, by 15,725,016 to 8,385,586, but a Republican Progressive, Robert La Follette, who got 4,822,856, Coolidge thus getting more votes than both of them combined, and an electoral college margin of 382 to 136. The year, as we have already noted, was a key one in the history of the American musical theater. But it was also fertile in American literature generally. The novels of the period included Scott Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise* (192o), Sinclair Lewis' *Main*

Street (1920), John Dos Passos' *Three Soldiers* (1921), Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* (1925), William Faulkner's *Soldier's Pay* (1926), Upton Sinclair's *Boston* (1928), and, in 1929, Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* and Thomas Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel*. That is, by any standard, a brilliant decade.

During the 1920s, in fact, America began suddenly to acquire a cultural density, or what Lionel Trilling called `a thickening of life,' which it had never before possessed and whose absence Henry James had plaintively deplored a generation before. It was also learning, like more mature European societies, to cherish its past. It was during the 1920s that the national conservation movement really got under way and restored colonial Williamsburg, for example, while at the same time contemporary painting was brought together in the new Museum of Modern Art, which opened in 1929. A sharp French observer, Andre Siegfried, following a hundred years later in the steps of De Tocqueville, produced an *apercu* of the nation in 1927 whose message was presented by its title, *America Comes of Age*. The American people, he declared, `as a result of the revolutionary changes brought about by modern methods of production ... are now creating on a vast scale in entirely original social structure.'

This was the blossoming scene Calvin Coolidge chose to leave as abruptly as he had entered it. It was an aspect of his minimalist approach to life and office that he not only refrained from doing whatever was not strictly necessary but also believed it right to stop doing anything at all as soon as he felt he had performed his dutiful service. He was widely read in history, like Woodrow Wilson, but he was much more conscious than Wilson of Lord Acton's warning about the tendency of power to corrupt. He liked the idea of an America in which a man of ability and righteousness emerged from the backwoods to take his place as first citizen and chief executive of the republic and then, his term of office completed, retired, if not exactly with relief, then with no regrets, to the backwoods again.

In one sense Coolidge was a professional politician, in that he had ascended the ladder of office, step by step, for over thirty years. But he was sufficiently old—fashioned to find the concept of a professional politician, making a career of office—seeking and hanging on to the bitter end, profoundly distasteful and demeaning. He had a strong, if unarticulated, sense of honor, and it was offended by the prospect that some people, even in his own party let alone outside it, might accuse him of `clinging' to power. He had a genuine respect for the American tradition of the maximum two—term presidency. That would not have been infringed, of course, by his offering himself a second time, but he had served two years of Harding's mandate, making six in all, and he felt that was enough. Coolidge was never exactly popular—he lacked both personal charm and the slightest desire to develop winning ways—but he was hugely respected. The Republican nomination was his for the asking and he would have had no difficulty in carrying the country in 1928, probably with a greater plurality than Hoover did. He was only fifty—six. But as he told Associate justice Harlan Stone, `It is a pretty good idea to get out when they still want you.'

Coolidge had the sense to follow his own advice. He was not without humor, albeit of a very peculiar kind, and he liked to surprise. In the Oval Office he would sometimes call in his staff by bell, then hide under his desk, observing their mystification with wry pleasure. On August 2, 1927 he summoned some thirty journalists and, when they arrived, told them: `The line forms on the left.' He then handed each a 2—by—9—inch sheet of paper on which he himself had typed, `I do not choose to run for president in 1928.' That was it: no questions were allowed. It may be that, the following year, seeing Hoover's triumph, he regretted this decision, but he never made

the slightest move to reverse it. At the time, he gave no explanation for it either. Indeed, his last words to the press at the White House were typically negative, snapping at them: `Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of my administration has been minding my own business.'

When Coolidge ventured to explain himself, in the final chapter of his *Autobiography*, published in 1929, he contented himself with saying that eight years in the White House was enough, perhaps more than enough: `An examination of the records of those Presidents who have served eight years will disclose that in almost every instance the latter parts of their term have shown very little in the way of constructive accomplishment. They have often been clouded with grave disappointments.' That is true enough.

There may have been a personal reason too. Coolidge was the reverse of a demonstrative man but there were powerful emotions operating under the surface of his laced—in exterior, and the evidence is strong that he was deeply attached to his immediate family. While he was in office as president, he lost both his son Calvin, in 1924, and his beloved father, the Colonel, in 1926. There is no reason to think that Coolidge was particularly superstitious but he seems to have got it into his head that neither death would have occurred had he not occupied the White House. The death of his father he felt deeply and believed that it had come prematurely because the consequences of his own eminence had, as he put it, `overtaxed his strength.' The loss of Calvin was shattering. `When he went,' Coolidge wrote, `the power and the glory of the presidency went with him.' He mused sadly, `The ways of Providence are often beyond our understanding ... I do not know why such a price was exacted for occupying the White House.' That last is a curious remark. But Coolidge was not a New England Puritan for nothing, and it may be that he felt, in retrospect, that his son was taken from him as a punishment for his own sins of pride in the exercise of power. There was a particular incident which later haunted him—his firing of a long—serving Secret Service agent, Jim Haley, in a fit of petulance. Haley was blameless but Coolidge thought he had exposed Mrs Coolidge, his much adored Grace, to needless danger. Such an episode would never have given a second's concern to a Franklin Roosevelt or a Winston Churchill who, amid their grander moments, regularly abused power, and in a far more shameless fashion. But it worried Coolidge and he may have come to the conclusion, by August 2, 1927, the fifth anniversary of his accession to power, that his son's death had been a warning.

There is, of course, another explanation, that Coolidge felt in his bones that the good times were coming to an end, and he did not want to be in charge when the bottom fell out of the bull market. This was certainly a factor. By Coolidge's day, the history of the trade cycle was fairly well understood, and Coolidge—by nature a pessimist rather than an optimist—knew perfectly well that the boom would not last. All that was uncertain was when it would end and how dramatically. His closest advisor, Stone, who studied the markets, warned him of trouble ahead. He himself was certain the market would break, probably sooner rather than later. That was his private sentiment, reflected in his wife Grace's remark, 'Poppa says there's a depression coming.' But Coolidge did not feel it was his duty or in America's interests to talk the boom down publicly, to hasten the downturn or to take steps to limit its severity. Among his other lapidary phrases, he might easily have coined the maxim: `If it works, don't fix it.' That is certainly what he believed. That a depression would come was certain, but Coolidge probably assumed it would be on the scale of 1920, to be cured by a similar phase of masterly inactivity. If, however, something more was required, he felt he was not the man to do it. Grace Coolidge said he told a member of his Cabinet: `I know how to *save* money. All my training has been in that direction. The country is in a sound financial condition. Perhaps the time has come when we ought to *spend* money. I do not feel I am qualified to do that.'

Thus Coolidge departed, pulling down the curtain on the last genuine capitalist Arcadia. Another myth that has grown up about these times is that the Twenties Boom was a mere drunken spending—spree, bound to end in disaster, and that beneath a veneer of prosperity was an abyss of poverty. That is not true. The prosperity was very widespread. It was not universal. In the farming community it was patchy, and it largely eluded certain older industrial communities, such as the New England textile trade. But growth was spectacular. On a 1933—8 index of 100, it was 58 in 1921 and passed 110 in 1929. That involved an increase in national income from $59.4 to $87.2 billion in eight years, with real per—capita income rising from $522 to $716: not Babylonian luxury but a modest comfort never hitherto thought possible.

The heart of the consumer boom was in personal transport, which in a vast country, where some of the new cities were already 30 miles across, was not a luxury. At the beginning of 1914, 1,258,062 cars were registered in the US, which produced 569,054 during the year. Production rose to 5,621,715 in 1929, by which time cars registered in the US totaled 26,501,443 five—sixths of the world's production and one car for every five people in the country. This gives some idea of America's global dominance. In 1924 the four leading European car producers turned out only 11 percent of the cars manufactured in America. Even by the end of the decade European registrations were only 20 percent of the US level and production a mere 13 percent. The meaning of these figures is that the American working class had acquired the freedom of movement limited hitherto to a section of its middle class, and denied to European workers for another thirty years or more. Meanwhile the middle class was moving into air travel. Air passengers rose from 49,713 in 1920 to 417,505 in 1930 (by 1940 the figure was 3,185,278 and it was nearly 8 million by 1945). What the American Twenties demonstrated was the speed with which industrial productivity could transform luxuries into necessities and spread them down the class pyramid.

In fact, Twenties prosperity was a growing solvent of class and other barriers. Next to automobiles, it was the new electric industry which fueled and reflected the boom. Expenditure on radios rose from a mere $10,648,000 in 1920 to $411,637,000 in 1929, and total electrical product sales tripled in the decade to $2.4 billion. The mass radio audience (followed by the talkies) brought about the Americanization of immigrant communities and a new classlessness in dress, speech, and attitudes. Sinclair Lewis, revisiting `Main Street' on behalf of the *Nation* in 1924, found two working—class, small—town girls wearing `well—cut skirts, silk stockings, such shoes as can be bought nowhere in Europe [at the price], quiet blouses, bobbed hair, charming straw hats, and easily cynical expressions terrifying to the awkward man.' One of them served hash. `Both their dads are Bohemian; old mossbacks, tough old birds with whiskers that can't sling more English than a musk—rat. And yet, in one generation, here's their kids—real queens.' The Twenties marked the biggest advance for American women of any decade, before or since. By 1930 there were 10,546,000 women 'gainfully employed' outside the home; the largest number, as before, were in domestic/personal service (3,483,000) but there were now nearly 2 million in clerical work, 1,860,000 in manufacturing, and, most encouraging of all, 1,226,000 in the professions. Equally significant were the liberated housewives, the 'Blondies,' to whom their appliances, their cars, and their husband's high wages had brought leisure for the first time.

The coming of family affluence was reflected in the decline of radical politics and their union base. A 1929 survey quoted a union organizer: `The Ford car has done an awful lot of harm to the unions, here and everywhere else [in America]. As long as men have enough money to buy a second—hand Ford and tires and gasoline, they'll be out on the road and paying no attention to

union meetings.' In 1915, 1921, and 1922 the unions lost three key Supreme Court actions, and their 1919 strikes were disasters. The American Federation of Labor membership dropped from a high of 4,078,740 in 1920 to 2,532,261 in 1932. `Welfare capitalism' provided company sports facilities, holidays with pay, insurance and pension schemes, so that by 1927 4,700,000 workers were covered by group insurance and 1,400,000 were members of company unions. The American worker appeared to be on the threshold of a hitherto unimaginable middle—class existence of personal provision and responsibility which made collective action increasingly superfluous.

Reflecting this growth and prosperity, the United States had achieved a position of paramountcy in total world production never before attained during a period of prosperity by any other state: 34.4 percent of the whole, compared with Britain's 10.4, Germany's 10.3, Russia's 9.9, France's 5.0, Japan's 4.0, 2.5 for Italy, 2.1 for Canada, and 1.7 for Poland. The likelihood that Europe, followed by Asia, would soon begin to lean towards what Andre Siegfried called `America's original social structure' increased with every year the world economy remained buoyant. Granted another decade of prosperity on this scale, the history not just of America but of the entire world would have been vastly different and far more fortunate. But that was not to be. After the election of Herbert Hoover, and during the interregnum in Washington, President Coolidge was asked for a decision on long—term economic policy. He snapped, `We'll leave that to the Wonder Boy.'

PART SEVEN

‘Nothing to Fear But Fear Itself’

Superpower America, 1929 —1960

The wall street crash of October 1929, and the Great Depression which followed it, lasting effectively till the beginning of World War Two in 1939, remain mysterious, despite more than half a century of economic and historical analysis since. Bear markets, and the economic downturns they provoke, reflect trade—cycles which seem to be an inevitable feature of the modern industrial world economy. They are corrective instruments, restoring overheated markets and economies to reality, thus forming stable platforms from which growth can be resumed, soon reaching higher levels. What is puzzling about the events of the decade 1929—39 is the continuing severity of the market falls and the length and obstinacy of the Depression. What follows is an attempt to make historical sense of a tragic series of events for which no satisfactory explanation has yet been provided.'

America was, in general, a laissez—faire country in the 1920s. On the whole businessmen were free to make their own arrangements and workers free to bargain for wages at the market rate. But there was one important and dangerous qualification to this self—regulating economy. American industry was protected from foreign competition by high tariffs. The Republican presidents, Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover, did not resume and intensify the tentative attempts by Wilson to reduce tariffs and move closer to free trade. The Fordney—McCumber Tariff Act of 1922 and, still more, the Smoot—Hawley Act of 1930, which Hoover declined to veto, were devastating blows struck at world commerce, and so in the end at America's own. The fact is that America's presidents, and the Republican Congressional leadership, failed to stand up to the National Federation of Manufacturers, the American Federation of Labor, pressure groups formed by particular industries, and local pressure from industrial states, and so pursue the philosophy of economic freedom they claimed to hold.

Instead, during the 1920s the United States, in conjunction with the British and other leading industrial and financial powers, tried to keep the world prosperous by deliberately inflating the money supply. This was something which had been made possible by the creation of the Federal Reserve Bank system, something which could be done secretly, without legislative enactment or control, and without the public know ing, or the business community caring. Although the amount of money in circulation remained stable—$3.68 billion in dollar bills in circulation at the beginning of the 1920s and $3.64 billion in 1929—credit was expanded from $45.3 billion on June 30, 1921 to $73 billion in July 1929, a 61.8 percent expansion in eight years. The White House, the Treasury under Andrew Mellon (1855—1937) who was in charge for the whole period 1921—32, the Congress, the federal banks, and the private banks too combined to inflate credit. This would not have mattered if interest rates had been allowed to find their own level, that is if the manufacturers and farmers who borrowed money had paid interest at the rates savers were prepared to lend it. But, again, the same combination joined to keep interest rates artificially low. It was the stated policy of the Federal Reserve not only to `enlarge credit resources' but to do so `at rates of interest low enough to stimulate, protect and prosper all kinds of legitimate business.'

This deliberately managed inflation of credit applied not just nationally but internationally. The US government demanded the repayment of its war—loans to the European allies, chiefly Britain and France, but it also actively assisted foreign governments and businesses to raise money in

New York both by its own cheap money policy and by its own active interference in the foreign bond market. The government made it quite clear that it favored certain loans, and certain governments, and not others. The foreign loan policy foreshadowed, at the level of private enterprise, the official US policy of Marshall Aid in the years after 1947. The aims were the same: to keep the international economy afloat, to support certain regimes, and to promote America's export industries. The administration backed certain loans on condition part of them was spent in the US. The foreign lending boom began in 1921, following a Cabinet decision on May 20, 1921 and a meeting between Harding, Hoover, and US investment banks five days later. It ended in late 1928, thus coinciding precisely with the expansion of the money supply which underlay the boom. America's rulers, it can be argued, rejected the laissez—faire formality of free trade and hard money and took the soft political option of high tariffs and inflation. The domestic industries protected by the tariff, the export industries subsidized by the uneconomic loans, and of course the investment bankers who floated the bonds all benefited. The losers were the population as a whole, who were denied the competitive prices produced by cheap imports, suffered from the resulting inflation, and were the universal victims of the ultimate *degringolade*.

The architects of the policy were Benjamin Strong, governor of the New York Federal Reserve Bank, who until his death in 1928 was allpowerful in the formation of US financial policy, and Montague Norman, governor of the Bank of England. Their inspiration was the Bloomsbury economist John Maynard Keynes, whose influential *Tract on Monetary Reform* appeared in 1923. One of the myths of the interwar years is that laissez—faire capitalism made a mess of things until Keynes, with his great book, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936), introduced 'Keynesianism'—another word for government interference—and saved the world. In fact Keynes' Tract, advocating `managed currency' and a stabilized price—level, both involving constant government interference, coordinated internationally, was part of the problem. For most of the Twenties, Strong and Norman directed the currency management. Domestically and internationally, they constantly pumped more money into the system, and whenever the economy showed signs of flagging they increased the dose. The most notorious occasion was in July 1927, when Strong and Norman held a secret meeting of bankers at the Long Island estates of Ogden Mills, the US Treasury Under—Secretary, and Mrs Ruth Pratt, a Standard Oil heiress. This was a form of Long Island power—broking unknown, alas, to Scott Fitzgerald and the characters in *The Great Gatsby* (1925), otherwise we might have heard more about it at the time.

The memoirs of some of those present subsequently described what happened. When, at the meeting, Strong and Norman decided on another bout of inflation, Hjalmar Schacht, the great German financial wizard, protested. He argued that the financial underpinning of the postwar credit system, the so—called gold standard, was in fact a phony: it was merely a gold bullion standard, in which central banks kept tally by transferring gold bars among themselves. The true gold standard, he urged, existed only when banks paid gold coins on demand to people who presented their paper. This was the only means to insure that expansion was financed by genuine, voluntary savings, instead of by bank credit determined by a tiny oligarchy of financial Jupiters.6 He was supported by Charles Rist, deputy governor of the Bank of France, who objected when Strong told him, `I will give a little shot of whiskey to the Stock Market.' But the Germans and French were overruled and the New York Fed reduced its rate by another half percent to 3.5 percent—an amazing rate in the circumstances. Adolph Miller, a member of the Federal Reserve Board, subsequently described this decision in Senate testimony as `the greatest and boldest

operation ever undertaken by the Federal Reserve system [which] resulted in one of the most costly errors committed by it or any other banking system in the last 75 years.’’

The policy appeared to succeed in the short term. In the first half of the decade, world trade, thanks largely to US protectionism, had failed to return to its prewar level. Indeed in 1921—5, world trade, compared to 1911—14, was actually minus 1.42 percent. But during the four years 1926—9 it achieved a growth of 6.74, a performance not to be exceeded until the late 1950s. But prices remained stable, fluctuating between 93.4 in June 1921 to a peak of 104.5 in November 1925 and then down to 95.2 in June 1929. This suggested that the policy of deliberately controlled growth within a framework of price stability had been turned into reality. Keynes described `the successful management of the dollar by the Federal Reserve Board from 1923—8’ as a ‘triumph.’

Yet the inflation was there, and growing all the time. Without the kind of Olympian management the central bankers supplied, both prices and wages should have fallen, the first much faster than the second. Between 1919 and 1929, there was a phenomenal growth of productivity in the US, output per worker in manufacturing industry rising by 43 percent. This was made possible by an unprecedented increase in capital investment, rising at an annual average rate of 6.4 percent a year, and by huge advances in industrial technology. The productivity increase should have been reflected in much lower prices. The fact that they remained stable reflected economic management. It is true that, without this management, wages would have fallen too, but only marginally. Real wages, or purchasing power, would have risen steadily, *pari passu* with productivity, so the workers would have been able to enjoy more of the goods their improved performance was turning out of the factories.

As it was, the workers found it difficult to keep up with the new prosperity. The Twenties, far from being too materialistic, as the myth has it, were not materialistic enough. The Twenties boom was based essentially on automobiles. America was producing almost as many cars in the late 1920s as in the 1950s (in 1929 5,358,000, against 5,700,000 in 1953). The really big and absolutely genuine growth stock of the 1920s was General Motors: anyone who in 1921 had bought $25,000 of GM common stock was a millionaire by 1929, when GM was earning profits of $200 million a year. GM had been built up in the Twenties at the exnense of Ford’s market share by a genius called Alfred P. Sloane. In 1920 Ford had a 55.67 percent share of the industry, making 845,000 cars a year. Every other car sold was a Ford. GM came second, selling 193,275 a year. Ford had a mechanical strategy, making the best—value car at the lowest possible price, changing it little, except for mechanical reasons, and offering little choice. Sloane, like Ford, was an engineer, with a degree in mechanical engineering from MIT, something Ford never had, and a Brooklyn accent. His was a consumer strategy. He made his way upwards by becoming an expert in ball—bearings, and his underlings compared him to one—’self—lubricating, smooth, eliminates friction and carries the load.’

While Ford made the product as well as he could, then looked for people to buy it, Sloane did it the other way round. He produced the widest possible range of cars for the maximum spread of customers. He said there was nothing new in it; everyone who made shoes did the same. He had five basic brands of car—Chevrolet, Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Buick, and Cadillac—to cover the major price brackets, but each produced in numerous versions. And the whole range, from 1923, changed every year. He introduced the supremacy of style and turned cars into a mechanical adjunct of the fashion industry. He wrote: `Today the appearance of a motor—car is a most important factor in the selling end of the business—perhaps *the* most important factor—because everyone knows the car will run.’ His cars looked more and more imposing as they expanded in

size, guzzled more gas and piled on the chrome. He appealed strongly to the American cult of bigness and the linked cult of variety, he pushed Ford into a bad second place, and he made GM into the largest manufacturing company in the world.

But there was a double price to pay. In the long term Sloane made GM's cars—and all the other companies, including Ford, followed suit—into what have been termed `overblown, overpriced monstrosities built by oafs for thieves to sell to mental defectives.' By the 1950s, American cars had become `technologically out of date, impractical and unsafe cathedrals of chrome, manufactured sloppily and sold using methods than can only be described as shameful.' The Buick and Oldsmobile of 1958 were `Huge, vulgar, dripping with pot metal, and barely able to stagger down the highway. They were everything car people hated about the American automobile.' As a result, the Japanese car industry was able to do to GM what GM had done to Ford in the 1920s.

There was an immediate price to pay too. GM made cars too expensive, or rather more expensive than they need have been. Ford's strategy of getting the price down each year was abandoned, even by Ford; GM, and eventually all the rest, sold not on price but on appearance and gimmickry. The enormous gains in productivity were frittered away on appearances rather than utility, and on increased profits to shareholders with the object of drumming up the share price and making capital gains. This was fine for the stock market but bad for the customer, especially the working—class customer whom Ford had made into car—owners. Hence working—class families could still afford carsjust. GM made it easier by hire—purchase. It was the first big company to establish a wholly owned subsidiary for this purpose. By 1925 GM asked only for one—third down, the rest in installments, and sold three in four of its cars this way. In December 1927, Hoover as secretary of commerce proudly claimed that average industrial wages had reached $4 a day, that is $1,200 a year. But a government agency estimated it cost $2,000 a year to bring up a family of five in `health and decency.' By the end of the Twenties many working—class families found it hard to keep up with the installments on their car, or to renew. And one disadvantage of building an industrial economy round the automobile is that, when money is short, a car's life can easily be arbitrarily prolonged by a few years. Towards the end of the Twenties, the failure to pass on the fruits of productivity increases to the consumer in terms of lower costs was beginning to take its toll. There is some evidence that the increasing number of women in employment reflected a decline in real incomes, especially among the middle class. As the boom continued, and prices failed to fall, it became harder for the consumer to keep the boom going. The bankers, in turn, had to work harder to inflate the economy: Strong's `little shot of whiskey' was the last big push; next year he was dead, leaving no one with either the same degree of monetary adventurism or the same authority.

Strong's last push in fact did little to help the industrial economy. It fed speculation. Very little of the new credit went through to the mass consumer. As it was, the spending side of the US economy was unbalanced. The 5 percent of the population with the top incomes had onethird of all personal income, and they did not buy Fords and Chevrolets. The proportion of income received in interest, dividends, and rents, as opposed to wages, was about twice as high as the levels we have become accustomed to in the last half—century. Strong's shot of whiskey benefited almost solely the non—wage—earners—the last phase of the boom was largely speculative. Until 1928, stock—exchange prices had merely kept pace with actual industrial performance. From the beginning of 1928 the element of unreality, of fantasy indeed, began to grow. As Bagehot put it, `People are most credulous when they are most happy.' People bought

and sold in blissful ignorance. In 1927 the number of shares changing hands, at 567,990,875, broke all records. The figure then rose to 920,550,032.

Two new and sinister elements emerged: a vast increase in margintrading and a rash of hastily cobbled—together investment trusts. Traditionally, stocks were valued at about ten times earnings. During the boom, as prices of stocks rose, dividend yields fell. With high margintrading, earnings on shares (or dividend yields), running at only 1 or 2 percent, were far less than the interest of 8—12 percent on loans used to buy them. This meant that any profits were on capital gains alone. Over the past 125 years of American history, dividend yields have averaged 4.5 percent. The figures show that, whenever the dividend yield sinks to as low as z percent, a crack in the market and a subsequent slump is on the way. That had been true of the last two bear markets before 1929 came, and investors or market analysts who studied historical performance, the only sure guide to prudence, should have spotted this. There were indeed some glaring warnings. Radio Corporation of America, which had never paid a dividend at all, and whose earnings on shares were thus zero, nonetheless rose from 85 to 420 points in 1928. That was pure speculation, calculated on the assumption that capital gains would continue to be made indefinitely, a manifest absurdity. By 1929 some stocks were selling at fifty times earnings. As one expert put it, `The market was discounting not merely the future but the hereafter.'

A market boom based on capital gains is merely a form of pyramidselling. The new investment trusts, which by the end of 1928 were emerging at the rate of one a day, were archetypal inverted pyramids. They had what, to use the new 1920s vogue term, was called `high leverage,' through their own supposedly shrewd investments, and secured phenomenal paper growth on the basis of a very small plinth of real growth. Thus the United Founders Corporation was built up into a company with nominal resources of $686,165,000 from an original investment of a mere $500. The 1929 market value of another investment trust was over a billion dollars, but its chief asset was an electrical company worth only $6 million in 1921. These firms claimed to exist to enable the `little man' to get a `share of the action.' In fact they merely provided an additional superstructure of almost pure speculation, and the `high leverage' worked in reverse once the market broke.

It is astonishing that, once margin—trading and investment—trusting took over, the federal bankers failed to raise interest rates and persisted in cheap money. But many of the bankers had lost their sense of reality by the beginning of 1929. Indeed they were speculating themselves, often in their own stock. One of the worst offenders was Charles Mitchell (finally indicted for grand larceny in 1938), the chairman of National City Bank, who on January 1, 1929 became a director of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Mitchell filled the role of Strong at a cruder level, and kept the boom going through most of 1929. The ferocious witchhunt of Wall Street begun in 1932 by the Senate Committee on Banking and the Currency, which served as a prototype for the anti—Communist witchhunts of the 1940s and 1950s, actually disclosed little law—breaking. Mitchell was the only major culprit and even his case exposed more the social mores of finance capitalism than actual wickedness. `Every great crisis,' Bagehot remarked, `reveals the excessive speculations of many houses which no one before suspected.' The 1929 crash revealed in addition the naivety and ignorance of bankers, businessmen, Wall Street experts, and academic economists, high and low; it showed they did not understand the system they had been so confidently manipulating. They had tried to substitute their own well—meaning policies for what Adam Smith called the 'invisible hand' of the market and they had wrought disaster. Far from demonstrating, as Keynes and his school later argued—at the time Keynes failed to predict either the crash or the extent or duration of the recession—the dangers of a

self—regulating economy, the *degringolade* indicated the opposite: the risks of ill—informed meddling.

The credit inflation petered out at the end of 1928. In consequence, six months later the economy went into decline. The market collapse followed after a three—month delay. All this was to be expected. It ought to have been welcomed. It was the pattern of the 19th century and of the loth up to 1920—1. It was capitalist `normalcy,' a `market correction.' To anyone who studied historical precedents, the figures suggested the correction would be a severe one, simply because the speculation had been so uninhibited. At the peak of the craze there were about a million active speculators. Out of an American population of 120 million, about 29—30 million families had an active association with the market. The economy ceased to expand in June 1929. The bull market in stocks really came to an end on September 3. The later `rises' were merely hiccups in a steady downward trend. On Monday, October 21, for the first time, the ticker—tape could not keep pace with the news of falls and never caught up. In the confusion the panic intensified (the first margin calls had gone out on the Saturday before) and speculators began to realize they might lose their savings and even their homes. On Thursday, October 24 shares dropped vertically with no one buying, speculators were sold out as they failed to respond to margin calls, crowds gathered on Broad Street outside the New York Stock Exchange, and by the end of the day eleven men well known in Wall Street had committed suicide. Next week came Black Tuesday, the 29th, and the first selling of sound stocks in order to provide desperately needed liquidity.

Business downturns serve essential purposes. They have to be sharp. But they need not be long because they are self—adjusting. All they require on the part of governments, the business community, and the public is patience. The 1920 recession had adjusted itself, helped by Harding's government cuts, in less than a year. There was no reason why the 1929 fall should have taken longer, for the American economy was fundamentally sound, as Coolidge had said. On November 13, at the end of the immediate four—week panic, the index was at 224, down from its peak at 452. There was nothing wrong in that. It had been only 245 in December 1928 after a year of steep rises. The panic merely knocked out the speculative element, leaving sound stock at about their right value in relation to earnings. If the recession had been allowed to adjust itself, as it would have done by the end of 1930 on any earlier analogy, confidence would have returned and the world slump need never have occurred. Instead the market went on down, slowly but inexorably, ceasing to reflect economic realities—its true functionand instead becoming an engine of doom, carrying into the pit the entire nation and, with it, the world. By July 8, 1932 the *New York Times* industrials had fallen from 224 at the end of the panic to 58. US Steel, selling at 262 before the market broke in 1929, was now only 22. GM, one of the best—run and most successful manufacturing groups in the world, had fallen from 73 to 8. By this time the entire outlook for America had changed, infinitely for the worse. How did this happen? Why did the normal recovery not take place?

The conventional explanation is that Herbert Hoover, President when Wall Street collapsed and during the period when the crisis turned into the Great Depression, was a laissez—faire ideologue who refused to use public money and government power to refloat the economy. As soon as President Franklin Delano Roosevelt succeeded him, in 1933, and—having no such inhibitions about government intervention—started to apply state planning, the clouds lifted and the nation got back to work. There is no truth in this mythology, though there were indeed profound differences of character between the two men, which had some bearing on the crisis. Hoover was a social engineer. Roosevelt was a social psychologist. But neither understood the

nature of the Depression, or how to cure it. It is likely that the efforts of both merely served to prolong the crisis.

The new fashion of social engineering—the notion that action from above could determine the shape of society and that human beings could be manhandled and manipulated like earth and concrete—had come into its own in World War One. It had, as we have seen, got a grip even in America, since it fitted so neatly on to the enlarged state laid down by the Wilson administration in the years before America entered the conflict. Some pundits wished to go further and install the engineer himself as king. That was the argument pursued by Thorsten Veblen, the sociologist who was, perhaps, the most influential progressive writer in America in the first quarter of the century. He had first touched on the theme in his *The Theory o f the Leisure Class* (1899) and he developed it in *The Engineers and the Price System* (1921). In these years, the vast dams and hydroelectric schemes which were planned or built—the Boulder Canyon Dam being the outstanding example—impressed everyone with the magic power of the mechanical engineer, who could organize such power over nature, harnessing enormous and savage rivers which, a generation ago, had seem untameable. This was a worldwide phenomenon. The two men most impressed by the hydroelectric—dam image of power were Lenin and Stalin, who used their totalitarian authority to carry through colossal distortions of nature, including the switching of immense rivers from the Arctic to other outlets, the tragic consequences of which are only now being measured. Veblen presented the engineer as the new Superman. He saw him as a disinterested and benevolent figure, who was out to replace the Big Businessman, eliminate both the values of the leisure class and the profit motive, and run the economy in the interests of consumers.

Hoover, born in 1874, was a larger—than—life exemplar of the new Superman and was given the opportunity to test Veblen's theory to destruction. He not only believed in a kind of social engineering, he actually was an engineer, and a highly successful one. Born in West Branch, Iowa, of a poor Quaker farming family, he was orphaned at nine and worked himself through school and Stanford University to an engineering degree. His style of dress reflected his Quaker background till the day death finally claimed him in the age of John F. Kennedy. Hoover swore, smoked, and drank, and went fishing on Sundays—but always in a stiff white collar and tie. Between 1900 and 1915 he directed mining projects all over the world and made a fortune of $4 million. He became the outstanding member of Wilson's war—team, absorbed its philosophy of forceful government direction and planning, and then as head of America's postwar Commission of Relief (a foretaste of the later Marshall Aid and Point Four programs) achieved a worldwide reputation for efficient, interventionist benevolence. The notion that Hoover was a hard, unfeeling man, later circulated by the New Dealers, was entirely false. Maxim Gorky wrote to him at the time: `You have saved from death 3,500,000 children and 5,500,000 adults.' Keynes described him as `the only man who emerged from the ordeal of Paris with an enhanced reputation ... [who] imported to the councils of Paris, when he took part in them, knowledge, magnanimity and disinterestedness which, if they had been found in other quarters also, would have given us the Good Peace.`y Franklin Roosevelt, who had worked with Hoover as Navy under—secretary and shared his outlook, wrote to a friend: `He is certainly a wonder and I wish we could make him President of the United States. There could not be a better one.'

As secretary of commerce for eight years during the 1920s, Hoover showed himself a corporatist, an activist, and an interventionist, running counter to the general thrust, or rather non—thrust, of the Harding—Coolidge administrations. His predecessor, Oscar Strauss, told him he needed to work only two hours a day, `putting the fish to bed at night and turning on the lights

around the coast.' In fact his was the only department which increased its bureaucracy, from 13,005 to 15,850, and its cost, from $24.5 million to $37.6 million—quite an achievement in the cost—conscious, minimalist—government Twenties. It was one reason Coolidge disliked him. Hoover came into office at the tail—end of the 1920—1 depression, and immediately set about forming committees and trade councils, sponsoring research programs, pushing expenditure, persuading employers to keep up wages and `divided time' to increase jobs, and, above all, forcing `cooperation between the Federal, state and municipal governments to increase public works.'' He sponsored working parties and study groups (new vogue terms), got people to produce expert reports, and generated a buzz of endless activity. There was no aspect of public policy in which Hoover was not intensely active, usually personally: oil, conservation, Indian policy, public education, child health, housing, social waste, and agriculture (when he became president he was his own Secretary of Agriculture and the 1929 Agriculture Marketing Act was entirely his work).

Harding did not like this hyperactivity, but was impressed by Hoover's brains and prestige—'The smartest gink I know.' Coolidge hated it but by the time he took over Hoover was too much part of the administration's furniture to be removed. Besides, Hoover's corporatism, the notion that the state, business, the unions and other public bodies should work together in gentle, but persistent and continuous manipulation to make life better for all, was the received wisdom of the day among enlightened capitalists, left—wing Republicans, and nonsocialist intellectuals, as well as a broad swathe of Democrats and publicspirited academics. Yankee—style corporatism was the American response to the new ideologies of Europe, especially Mussolini's Fascism, then regarded as a highly promising experiment. It was as important to `right—thinking people' in the Twenties as was Stalinism in the Thirties. Hoover was its outstanding impresario and ideologue. One of his admirers, interestingly enough, was Jean Monnet, who later renamed the approach `indicative planning' (as opposed to `imposed planning,' the `command economy') and made it the basis both for France's post—I945 planning system and for the planning structure of what was to become the European Union.

Yet Hoover was not a statist, let alone a socialist; and he said he was opposed to any attempt 'to smuggle fascism into America through a hack door.'' On many issues he was liberal. He wanted aid to flow to what were later to be called 'underdeveloped countries,' which in the 1920s and 1930s were simply called 'backward.' He deplored the exclusion of the Japanese, for racial reasons, from the 1924 immigration quotas. His wife entertained the ladies of black congressmen. Unlike Woodrow Wilson and his wife, or Franklin Roosevelt, he did not make anti—semitic jokes in private. To a wide spectrum of educated Americans in the 1920s, he was exactly what an American statesman ought to be, long before he got to the White House.

His selection as Republican candidate in 1928 was a foregone conclusion. He was up against a strong Democratic candidate, Governor Alfred E. Smith (1873—1944), who was a popular and successful governor of New York and who openly campaigned against Prohibition. But Smith was a Catholic, and anti—Catholic prejudice was still strong, especially in rural areas. Hoover, who stuck up for Prohibition, seemed to stand, despite his social engineering, for old—fashioned moral values, as stiff and unyielding as his starched collars. He promised the voters `a chicken for every pot and a car for every garage.' He was a substantial victor in a high voter turnout, winning 21,392,190 to Smith's 15,016,443, and sweeping the electoral college 444 to 87. (It was significant, though, that Smith carried all twelve of America's largest cities: a portent.) It was universally believed Hoover would work wonders. The *Philadelphia Record* called him `easily

the most commanding figure in the modern science of "engineering statesmanship." ‘ The *Boston Globe* hailed the arrival in the White House of a disciple of `the dynamics of mastery.’ They all called him the `Great Engineer.’ Hoover himself said he was worried by these exaggerated expectations: `They have a conviction that I am a sort of superman, that no problem is beyond my capacity.’ But he was not really worried. He knew exactly what to do. He ran the administration like a dictator. (The term `dictator’ did not at this time carry much opprobrium.) He ignored or bullied Congress. He laid down the law, like a comic character from Dickens, and was fond of telling subordinates: `When you know me better, you will find that when I say a thing is a fact, it is a fact.’

When Hoover took over the presidency in March 1929, the mechanism of the Wall Street debacle was already whirring. The only useful thing he might have done would have been to allow the artificially low interest rates to rise to their natural level, which would have killed off the bull market gradually and at least given the impression that somebody was in charge. That would have avoided the dreadful dramas of the autumn, which had a profound psychological effect. But Hoover did not do so: government—induced cheap credit was the very bedrock of his policy. When the magnitude of the crisis became apparent, late in the year, Andrew Mellon, the Treasury Secretary, at last spoke out to repudiate Hoover’s interventionist policy and return to strict laissezfaire. He told Hoover that administration policy should be to `liquidate labor, liquidate stocks, liquidate the farmers, liquidate real estate’ and so `purge the rottenness from the economy.’ It was the only sensible advice Hoover received throughout his presidency. By allowing the Depression to let rip, unsound businesses would quickly have been bankrupted and the sound would have survived. Wages would have fallen to their natural level. That for Hoover was the rub. He believed that high wages were the most important element in prosperity and that maintaining wages at existing levels was essential to contain and overcome depressions.

From the very start, therefore, Hoover agreed to take on the business cycle and stamp it flat with all the resources of government. He wrote: `No president before has ever believed there was a government responsibility in such cases ... there we had to pioneer a new field.’ He resumed credit inflation, the Federal Reserve adding almost $300 million to credit in the last week of October 1929 alone. In November he held a series of conferences with industrial leaders in which he exacted from them solemn promises not to cut wages—even to increase them if possible—promises which on the whole were kept till 1932. The American Federation of Labor’s journal praised this policy—never before had US employers been marshaled to act together, and the decision marked an `epoch in the history of civilization—high wages.’ Keynes in a memo to Britain’s Labour Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, praised Hoover’s moves in maintaining high wage—levels and called federal credit—expansion `thoroughly satisfactory.’ Indeed in most respects what Hoover did would later have been called a ‘Keynesian solution.’ He cut taxes heavily. Those of a family man with an income of $4,000 went down by two—thirds. He increased government spending. He deliberately ran up a huge deficit. It was $2.2 billion in 1931, by which point the government’s share of GNP had increased from 16.4 percent in 1930 to 21.5 percent. This was the largest—ever increase in government spending, most of which ($1 billion) was accounted for by transfer—payments. True, he ruled out direct relief and tried to channel government money through the banks rather than giving it to businesses and individuals. But that he used government cash to reflate the economy is beyond question. Coolidge’s advice to angry farmers’ delegations which came to him asking for federal cash had been bleak: `Take up religion.’ Hoover’s new Agricultural Marketing Act gave them $500 million in federal money, increased by a further $100 million early in 1930. In 1931 he extended this to the

economy as a whole with his Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) as part of a nine—point program of government intervention which he produced in December 1931.

This was the real beginning of the New Deal, insofar as it had an objective existence as opposed to propaganda and mythology. More major public works were started in Hoover's four years than in the previous thirty. They included the San Francisco Bay Bridge, the Los Angeles Aqueduct, and the Hoover Dam. A project to build the St Lawrence Seaway was scrapped by Congressional parsimony—the White House favored it. When intervention failed to deliver the goods, Hoover doubled and redoubled it. In July 1932, the RFC's capital was increased by nearly 100 percent to $3.8 billion and the new Emergency Relief and Construction Act extended its positive role: in 1932 alone it gave credits of $2.3 billion plus $1.6 billion in cash. The essence of the New Deal was now in place. One of its satraps, Rexwell Tugwell, finally conceded in an interview forty years after the event (1974): `We didn't admit it at the time, but practically the whole New Deal was extrapolated from programs that Hoover started.' By this point, however, Hoover had lost control of Congress, which was horrified by the deficit and insisted that the budget had to be brought back into balance after two years of deficit. The 1932 Revenue Act saw the greatest taxation increase in US history in peacetime, with the rate on high incomes jumping from a quarter to 63 percent. This made nonsense of Hoover's earlier tax cuts, but by this time Hoover was not in a position to pursue a coherent policy.

All he had left was his interventionist rhetoric, and that continued louder than ever. Hoover liked activist military metaphors to describe his interventionism. `The battle to set our economic machine in motion in this emergency takes new forms and requires new tactics from time to time. We used such emergency powers to win the war; we can use them to fight the Depression' (May 1931). `If there shall be no retreat, if the attack shall continue as it is now organized, then this battle is won' (August 1932). `We might have done nothing. That would have been utter ruin. Instead we met the situation with proposals to private business and to Congress of the most gigantic program of economic defense and counter—attack ever involved in the history of the Republic ... For the first time in the history of Depression, dividends, profits and the cost of living have been reduced before wages have suffered ... They are now the highest real wages in the world ... Some of the reactionary economists urged that we should allow the liquidation to take its course until we had found bottom ... We determined that we would not follow the advice of the bitter—end liquidationists and see the whole body of debtors in the US brought to bankruptcy and the savings of our people brought to destruction' (October 1922).

The effect of this rhetoric was to persuade the financial community that Hoover was pro—labor and anti—business, and this had a further deflationary effect. It was reinforced by his incessant attacks on the stock exchanges, which he regarded as parasitical, and his demands that they be investigated pushed stocks down still further and discouraged private investors. His policy of public investments prevented necessary liquidations. The businesses he hoped thus to save either went bankrupt in the end, after fearful agonies, or were burdened throughout the 1930s by a crushing load of debt. Hoover undermined property rights by weakening the bankruptcy laws and encouraging states to halt auction—sales for debt, ban foreclosures, or impose debt moratoria. This in itself impeded the ability of the banks to save themselves and maintain confidence. Hoover pushed federal credit into the banks and bullied them into inflating, thus increasing the precariousness of their position.

The final crisis came with the collapse of American exports. The punitive Smoot—Hawley tariff of 1930, which sharply increased import duties, helped to spread the Depression to Europe. On May 11, 1931, the collapse of Austria's leading bank, the Credit Anstalt, pushed over a

whole row of European dominoes. On June 21 Hoover's plan for a moratorium for reparations and war debts came much too late. All German banks shut on July 13. The British Labour government collapsed on August 2.4 and on September 21 Britain abandoned the gold standard. Debt—repudiations ensued. No one could now buy America's goods and its policy of foreign loans as a substitute for free trade became meaningless. Foreigners lost confidence in the dollar and, since America was still on the gold standard, began to pull out their gold, a trend that spread to American customers. In 1931—2 some 5,096 banks, with deposits of well over $3 billion, went bust and the process culminated early in 1933 when the US banking system came to a virtual standstill in the last weeks of the Hoover presidency, adding what appeared to be the coping stone to the President's monument of failure.

By this time Hoover's frenzied interventionism had prolonged the Depression into its fourth year. The damage was enormous, though it was patchy and often contradictory. Industrial production, which had been 114 in August 1929, was 54 by March 1933. Business construction, which had totaled $8.7 billion in 1929, fell to $1.4 billion in 1933. There was a 77 percent decline in the production of durable manufactures during this period. Thanks to Hoover's pro—labor policies, real wages actually rose. The losers, of course, were those who had no wages at all. Unemployment had been only 3.2 percent in 1929. It rose to 24.9 percent in 1933 and 26.7 percent in 1934. At one point it was estimated that (excluding farm families) about 34 million men, women, and children were without any income at all—28 percent of the population. Landlords could not collect rents and so could not pay taxes. City revenues collapsed, bringing down the relief system, such as it was, and city services. Chicago owed its teachers $20 million. In some areas schools closed down most of the time. In New York in 1932 more than 300,000 children could not be taught because there were no funds. Among those still attending, the Health Department reported 20 percent malnutrition. By 1933 the US Office of Education estimated that 1,500 higher—education colleges had gone bankrupt or shut. University enrollments fell, for the first time in American history, by a quarter—million. Few bought books. None of Chicago's public libraries bought a single new book for twelve months. Total book sales fell by 50 percent. Little, Brown of Boston reported 1932—3 as the worst year since they began publishing in 1837. John Steinbeck complained, `When people are broke the first thing they give up is books.'

Thus impoverished, writers and intellectuals generally veered sharply to the left in these years Indeed 1929—33 was a great watershed in American intellectual history. In the 18th century American men of ideas and letters had been closely in tune with the republicanism of the Founding Fathers. In the 19th century they had on the whole endorsed the individualism which was at the core of the American way of lifethe archetypal intellectual of the mid—century, Emerson, had been himself a traveling salesman for the spirit of self—help in the Midwest. From the early Thirties, however, the intellectuals, carrying with them a predominant part of academia and workers in the media, moved into a position of criticism and hostility towards the structural ideas of the American consensus: the free market, capitalism, individualism, enterprise, independence, and personal responsibility.

One of those who recognized the importance of this cultural watershed at the time was Edmund Wilson, whose Depression articles were collected as *The American Jitters* (1932). He thought a good time was coming for the American intelligentsia, who hitherto had had no particular function or purpose or direction but were now, like their Russian counterparts in the early 19th century, moving into a position of irrevocable opposition to the regime, becoming true critics of society. Books might not be being bought but more people were reading serious ones

than ever before. The age of influence was now dawning for American writers, especially the younger ones `who had grown up in the Big Business era and had always resented its barbarism, its crowding out of everything they cared about.' For them `those years were not depressing but stimulating. One couldn't help being exhilarated at the sudden, unexpected collapse of the stupid gigantic fraud. It gave us a new sense of freedom; and it gave us a new sense of power.'

It is a curious fact that writers, often the least organized people in their own lives, instinctively support planning in the public realm. And at the beginning of the 1930s, planning became the new Spirit of the Age. In 1932 it dominated the booklists. Stuart Chase, the popular economist who had fatuously predicted a `continuing boom' in 1929, now came out with a timely new title, *A New Deal*. George Soule demanded ultra—Hooveresque `works programs' in *A Planned Society*. Corporatist planning reached its apotheosis in *Modern Corporations and Private Property* by Aldolf Berle and Gardiner Means, which went through twenty impressions as the slump touched its nadir and predicted that the `law of corporations' would be the `potential constitutional law' of the new Economic State. America's most widely read historian, Charles Beard, advocated a 'Five—Year Plan for America.' Gerard Swope, head of General Electric, produced his own national plan. Henry Harriman, head of the New England Power Company, insisted: `We have left the period of extreme individualism ... Business prosperity and employment will be best maintained by an intelligent planned business structure.' Capitalists who disagreed, he added, `would be treated like any maverick ... roped and branded and made to run with the herd.' Charles Abbott of the American Institute of Steel Construction declared the country could no longer afford 'irresponsible, ill—informed, stubborn, and un—cooperative individualism.' *Business Week* under the sneering title `Do You Still Believe in Lazy—Fairies?' asked: `To plan or not to plan is no longer the question. The real question is: who is to do it?'

In logic and justice, it should have been the Great Engineer, the Wonder Boy. Had not his time come? But there is no logic and justice in history—only chronology. Hoover's time had come and gone. He had been in power four years, acting frantically, and the result was all around for men and women to see: utter ruin. New words based on his name had entered the vocabulary. What was a `Hoover blanket?' It was an old newspaper used to keep warm a man forced to sleep in the open. And a `Hoover Flag?' An empty pocket, turned inside out as a sign of destitution. `Hoover Wagons' were motor wagons, with no gas, pulled by horses or mules, a common sight by the summer of 1932. And on the outskirts of cities, or in open spaces within them, 'Hoovervilles' were growing up, shantytowns of homeless, unemployed people. In the autumn of 1932 hitchhikers displayed signs reading: `Give me a ride—or I'll vote for Hoover.' By this time, Republican bosses were telling him: `Keep off the front page'—the very fact he favored a line of policy discredited it. Oddly enough, he had warned himself in 1929: `If some unprecedented calamity should come upon this nation, I would be sacrificed to the unreasoning disappointment of a people who had expected too much.' Theodore Roosevelt had put it more bluntly: `When the average man loses his money, he is simply like a wounded snake and strikes right and left at anything, innocent or the reverse, that represents itself as conspicuous in his mind.', Hoover was anything but inconspicuous. He now became the Depression Made Flesh. He had always been a dour man. Now, almost imperceptibly, he emerged as the Great Depressive. The ablest of his Cabinet colleagues, Henry Stimson, said he avoided the White House to escape `the everpresent feeling of gloom that pervades everything connected with this administration.' He added: `I don't remember there has ever been a joke cracked in a single [Cabinet] meeting in the last year—and—a—half.' The bouncy H. G. Wells, who called on him at this time, found him `sickly, overworked and overwhelmed.'

Politicians whom the gods wish to destroy run out of luck too. The left, which had been crushed, discouraged, and ignored in the 1920s, sniffed the breeze of ruin and began to revive. In 1932 it organized a campaign on behalf of army veterans demanding a `War Bonus.' A `Bonus Expeditionary Force' of 20,000 was recruited, persuaded to `march on Washington,' and set up a shantytown camp in the middle of the city. It was ugly, pathetic, highly political, and, in a horrible way, photogenic; in short, excellent far—left propaganda. Congress flatly refused to provide more money. Hoover, whose policy on the issue was identical to F. D. Roosevelt's when the issue was revived in 1936, ordered the camp to be dispersed on July 28. The police said they could not handle it. So troops were called in under the cavalry commander Major (later General) George S. Patton. Both General MacArthur, then Army Chief of Staff, and his aide Major Dwight D. Eisenhower, played minor roles in the messy episode which followed. Photographs and newsreels did not bear out the assurances by the War Secretary Patrick Hurley that the army treated the Vets `with unparalleled humanity and kindness.' A War Department official inflamed tempers still further by calling the Vets `a mob of tramps and hoodlums with a generous sprinkling of Communist agitators.'

No episode in American history has been the basis for more falsehood, much of it deliberate. The Communists did not play a leading role in setting up the camp but they organized the subsequent propaganda with great skill. There were tales of cavalry charges, of the use of tanks and poison gas, of a little boy being bayoneted while trying to save his pet rabbit, and of tents and shelters being set on fire with people, including women and children, still inside. They were published in such works as W. W. Walters' *BEF: the Whole Story of the Bonus Army* (1933) and Jack Douglas' *Veteran on the March* (1934), both almost entirely fiction. A *Book of Ballads of the BEF* appeared, including such slogans as 'The Hoover Diet Is Gas' and 'I have seen the sabres gleaming as they lopped off veterans' ears.' A tract of 1940, by Bruce Minton and John Stuart, *The Fat Years and the Lean,* claimed that Hoover would not suffer the veterans to disband peacefully but ordered the army to attack 'without warning . . . The soldiers charged with fixed bayonets, firing into the crowd of unarmed men, women and children.' While the camp was burning, Hoover and his wife—so the account went—who 'kept the best table in White House history,' dined alone in full evening dress off a seven—course meal. Some of these fictions are still being repeated in respectable works of history half a century after the events.

What mattered more at the time was the administration's inept handling of the subsequent investigation, leading to a violent and public disagreement between the US Attorney—General and the superintendent of the Washington police, Brigadier Pelham D. Glassford, who had cultivated friendly relations with the Vets. Hoover, loyally supporting his Cabinet colleague, was made to look a liar and a monster. One of his staff wrote, 'There was no question that the President was hopelessly defeated.' All this took place in the closing stages of the 1932 presidential election campaign. The episode went some way to losing Hoover the support of the Protestant churches, which had hitherto opposed the 'wet' Democrats, Prohibition being the other big issue— perhaps, for most voters, the biggest issue—of the election.

The election of 1932 was also a watershed, since it ended the long period, beginning in the 1860s, when the Republicans had been the majority US party. Between the Civil War and 1932 the Democrats had won four presidential elections, electing Cleveland twice and Wilson twice, but in each case with minorities of the votes cast. Franklin D. Roosevelt, campaigning with Senator John Nance Garner of Texas, now carried the nation by a landslide, winning 22,809,638 to 15,758,901, and taking the electoral college by 472 votes to 59. The Democrats

also took both Houses of Congress. The 1932 election saw the emergence of the 'Democratic coalition of minorities,' based on the industrial Northeast (plus the South), which was to last for half a cen tury and turn Congress almost into a one—party legislature. The pattern had been foreshadowed by the strong showing of A. L. Smith in 1928 and, still more, by Democrats in the 1930s mid—term elections. But it was only in 1932 that the Republicans finally lost the progressive image they had enjoyed since Lincoln's day and saw it triumphantly seized by their Democratic enemies, with all that such a transfer implies in the support of the media, the approval of academia, the patronage of the intelligentsia, and, not least, the fabrication of historical orthodoxy.

The most welcome thing about Franklin D. Roosevelt at the time was that he was not Hoover. *Common Sense,* one of the new left—wing journals, got it right in one sense when it said the election had been a choice between 'the great glum engineer from Palo Alto' and 'the laughing boy from Hyde Park.' Roosevelt laughed. He was the first American President deliberately to make a point of showing a flashing smile whenever possible. By 1932 he was an experienced administrator with seven years in the Navy Department under Wilson and a moderately successful spell as governor of New York. At the beginning of 1932 Walter Lippmann described him as 'a highly impressionable person without a firm grasp of public affairs and without very strong convictions . . . not the dangerous enemy of anyone. He is too eager to please ... no crusader ... no tribune of the people ... no enemy of entrenched privilege. He is a pleasant man, without any important qualifications for the office, and would very much like to be president.'"[1] That was a shrewd and accurate assessment, before the reality was obscured by the patina of PR. *Time* called him 'a vigorous, well—intentioned gentleman of good birth and breeding.'

That too was accurate as far as it went. FDR was born in 1882 when the United States was an entity of thirty—nine states with a population of under 50 million. His mother, Sara Delano Roosevelt, had thirteen bloodlines going back to the *Mayflower.* She was described as 'not a woman but a Social Presence.' FDR was an only child and relished the fact, claiming he received in consequence 'a love and devotion that were perfect.' Being an only child, he never in all his life thought of anyone but himself. But he was frightened of his mother: 'Yes, I was afraid of her too.' The Delanos were snobbish, xenophobic, and anti—semitic, and FDR got all these characteristics from his mother. Yet he was not without an affability amounting, in a political sense, almost to populism. As heir to the splendid Hyde Park estate on the Hudson, which had been in the possession of the Jacobus branch of the Roosevelts for generations, FDR was brought up to feel, and felt himself, a young prince, who could afford to condescend. He was the first member of his family to call workers on the estate and local villagers (175 people out of the total population of Hyde Park township were employed by his family) by their Christian names. He found this worked in politics, later, and FDR (who rarely knew or remembered people's surnames) did more than anyone else to launch the American habit—now becoming global—of using first names on the barest acquaintance, or none at all.

FDR liked to think of himself as a countryman: 'I never have been and I hope I never will be a resident of New York City, he said. He liked to quote Jefferson: 'Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people, whose breasts he has made the peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue.' Like Jefferson, he made a point of cultivating his estate and claimed he had planted 200,000 trees there 'for my posterity to enjoy.' But, again like Jefferson, he rarely if ever actually worked in the fields, even before he was

crippled by poliomyelitis. When he said, 'I am a farmer from a family of farmers,' and when he called himself a 'hayseed' and when he discussed the relative merits of Silver Queen and Country Gentleman, he was making a political point rather than telling the strict truth. But his attachment to the estate and family was quite genuine.

Indeed there was something inbred about him. His marriage to TR's niece Eleanor, another Roosevelt and FDR's cousin (five times removed) was a dynastic, even a family marriage. She was an ugly duckling, whose own mother called her 'Granny,' and FDR married her in the same way as an English royal scion marries a German princess, for reasons of prudence, and with the reserved intention of finding romance elsewhere. FDR's family piety was strong. He inherited from his father a tweed suit made in 1878 and wore it till 1926, when he gave it to his son James, who was still wearing it in 1939. FDR was educated privately at home until fourteen, under his mother's supervision, and he learned to be devious and dissimulating to please her. So he was glad to get away to Groton under the famous Peabody, where he got a quasi—English education. Some claimed his accent was English. He certainly used phrases like 'that's not cricket,' though he never actually played the game. He hated leaving Groton, just as some English boys hate leaving Eton, and he was never quite the same success at Harvard. But he lived on the Gold Coast and was elected to the Hasty Pudding, whose oath was: 'Resolved: that the Lord's Anointed shall inherit the earth. Resolved: chat we are the Lord's Anointed.' He also had a good career with the *Harvard Crimson.*

Harvard was a more elitist institution then that it is now and by the time FDR got there it had already provided four presidents: John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Rutherford B. Hayes, and Theodore Roosevelt. FDR's father had been anti—politics—it was then the fashion among the elite, the subject of a chapter 'Why the Best Men Do Not Go into Politics' in James Bryce's famous book *The American Commonwealth.* But FDR was never in any doubt that politics was what he wanted. His politics were hereditary Democrat, rather as certain English families were hereditary Whig. Hence from Harvard he went into a New York law firm which specialized in trust—busting. FDR was always, by family tradition, training, instinct, and conviction, anti—business, or perhaps one should say suspicious and contemptuous of business. It is not surprising, therefore, that he was from the start regarded as good material by Tammany Hall, whose bosses picked him out from the throng.

FDR's rise from state Senator, Assistant Navy Secretary, and New York governor to the Democratic presidential nomination was marked by four characteristics. The first was a capacity to spend public money. At the Navy Department under Josephus Daniels he was the first of the big spenders, a conduit for the lobby—men and congressmen who wanted big contracts, and for crooks—on—the—make like Joe Kennedy, who as a navy supplier dealt with FDR. In many ways FDR was made for Big Government, which first arrived in his youth and which, in maturity, he nourished mightily. He used its patronage to build up his own machine in upper New York State. He told a mass audience in 1920 that in trying to get the navy ready for war he had 'committed enough illegal acts to put [myself] in jail for 999 years.' The second was a capacity to lie. FDR's lies are innumerable and some of those on the record are important. He lied glibly to extricate himself from responsibility for the 'Newport Scandal,' a murky business involving homosexuality at the Naval Training Station in 1919 which might have destroyed him. Even so, the Senate subcommittee investigating it reported that his conduct was 'immoral' and 'an abuse of the authority of his high office.' The third characteristic was a courageous and obstinate persistence, notable in overcoming misfortunes, particularly the attack of polio (1921) which disabled him for the rest of his life.

Polio taught FDR the capacity for the postponement of gratification,which many psychologists list as the hallmark of maturity. He was certainly a more formidable politician as a result of it. His skill in concealing aspects of himself enabled him to hide from the public the full effects of his condition. The affliction also led him to set up the commercial treatment center at Warm Springs, Georgia, which he owned, his most conspicuous act of personal benevolence (though it was racially segregated). The polio business meant that FDR's promiscuity which had estranged him from Eleanor, became more restrained. As a result of his affair with a woman called Lucy Mercer, Eleanor told him that their own sexual relations must cease (they already had six children), a threat to which she stuck; and FDR stuck to Lucy, in his own fashion: she was with him at Warm Springs when he died. FDR continued, however, to have other and discreet mistresses, and Eleanor took refuge in intense friendships with women.

Fourth, FDR developed public—relations skills of all kinds but he was the first US politician to pay particular attention to radio. At the 1928 Democratic convention, as in 1924, FDR was asked to give the speech nominating Al Smith. Afterwards he told the pundit Walter Lippmann: "I tried the definite experiment this year of writing and delivering my speech wholly for the benefit of the radio audience and press rather than for any forensic effect it might have on the delegates and audience in the Convention Hall.' Then and later, FDR was ahead of his time in anything to do with the presentation of his policies. He also avoided rows, though not necessarily enmities. As governor of New York, he was confronted by an angry parks commissioner, Robert Moses, who shouted: 'Frank Roosevelt, you're a goddammed liar, and this time I can prove it.' But FDR only smiled. He was at the origin of the saying, later often quoted by the Kennedy brothers in the 1960s: 'Don't get mad, get even.'

FDR was not regarded as a strong candidate in 1932. It is likely that any Democrat could have got himself elected against the dismal and discredited Hoover. That was certainly the view of FDR's two closest political associates, Louis Howe, his 'inside man,' who did all the detailed work for his campaigns, but who was regarded by Roosevelt as too ugly and scruffy to appear in public alongside him, and Jim Farley, the polished pro, chairman of the Democratic National Committee in 1932, who stage—managed the campaign from the front and who was made postmaster—general in FDR's first two administrations. They both thought he was lucky, 'the man for the hour.' Like many other people, they underestimated FDR's skill at manipulating the system once he was in charge of it and the tenacity with which he gripped power. Garner, his running mate, who had reluctantly surrendered the speakership of the House in order to help Roosevelt, said that all he had to do to win was to stay alive till election day.

Considering the deplorable state of the nation, the lack of cooperation between the newly elected FDR and the outgoing Hoover during the long interregnum from the election in early November to the inauguration in March was a scandal, reflecting badly on both men but particularly on Hoover. He regarded FDR as beneath contempt, a lightweight, who had allowed his followers during the campaign to make statements he knew to be lies. Hoover had unwittingly embittered FDR by keeping him painfully standing, despite his crutches, during a meeting of governors. Once elected, FDR conceived the absurd notion that Hoover ought to appoint him secretary of state immediately, so that he and his Vice—President could resign and FDR could constitutionally move into the White House. In fact the four months saw only an exchange of chilly letters and a formal call on the eve of the handover by FDR, terminating in an arctic exchange which would have warmed Henry James' heart. When Roosevelt, who was staying ar the Mayflower, then Washington's best hotel, said he realized that Hoover was too busy to return his call, the retiring President snarled: 'Mr Roosevelt, when you have been in Washington as long as I have, you will learn that the President of the

United States calls on nobody.' FDR took his revenge for this by refusing Hoover, whose life was under constant threat, a Secret Service bodyguard during his retirement.

The lack of cooperation during the interregnum worked in FDR's favor by appearing to draw a clear distinction between the two administrations. FDR's face was a new face at exactly the right time, and it was a smiling face. In 1932 Hoover had asked Rudy Vallee for an anti—Depression song. The curmudgeonly fellow had produced 'Brother, Can You Spare a Dime," an instant success but not what Hoover wanted. By contrast, FDR's campaign song, actually written for MGM's *Chasing Rainbows* on the eve of the Wall Street crash, struck just the right note: 'Happy Days Are Here Again.' FDR had a knack of coining, or causing others to coin, useful, catchy phrases. The term the 'New Deal' was resurrected for his acceptance speech at the Democratic convention by Sam Rosenman. It had been used before, more than once, but FDR made it seem his alone. In his March 1933 inaugural he had a splendid line: 'Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself.' That had a useful impact. And FDR was lucky. A weak recovery, which had been under way during Hoover's last six months, became visible in the spring and was promptly dubbed the `Roosevelt Market.' Luck is a very important element in political success, and FDR usually had it.

No series of events in modern history is surrounded by more mythology than the New Deal, inaugurated by the `Hundred Days.' Beyond generating the impression of furious movement, what FDR's Treasury Secretary, William Woodin, called `swift and staccato action,' there was no actual economic policy behind the program. Raymond Moley, the intellectual who helped FDR pick his Cabinet, said future historians might find some principle behind the activities but he could not. The most important figure in the New Deal, especially during the crucial early stages, was Jesse H. Jones (1874—1956), who ran the Reconstruction Finance Corporation under FDR and was, in effect, the New Deal's banker. He came from a Texan tobacco—farming family and turned Houston from a do—nothing town into a great Southern metropolis and port by deepening the Buffalo Bayou to make it possible for ocean—going ships to come up from the Gulf of Mexico, 50 miles away. This scheme was inspired by the Manchester Ship Canal in England and a nice touch was that Jones got the federal government to provide matching funds for local finance. From first to last he was expert at using taxpayers' dollars for combinations of public and private ventures. The new channel had opened in 1914 and Jones followed it by building Houston's first skyscrapers, ranging from Art Nouveau to Art Deco, in the Twenties. He would put up a ten—story building, then add extra stories when business justified it. The new Houston skyline, unmatched except in New York and Chicago, impressed people and drew investments. By 1930 Jones had moved Houston from third place in Texan cities to first, with a population of nearly 300,000, second only to New Orleans in the South. He was known to be a corner—cutter and a sly operator but the citizens said: `Well, we'd rather have Houston the way it is today, with all Jesse's sharp goings—on, than no Jesse and no Houston.'

During the war, Jones ran the American Red Cross, and played the country hick when he thought it useful. In London, he gatecrashed a party at Buckingham Palace, took off his wet shoes and warmed them in front of King George V's fire. Six feet two, weighing over 220 pounds, he radiated confidence and wealth: every time, said his wife, he passed one of the many buildings he owned, `he pats and pets it.' He provided Woodrow Wilson, and then his widow, with a $10,000 pension (there was then no official provision) and was celebrated for raising money for the Democratic Party. Critics talked of his `stalwart avarice and piratical trading spirit.' Jones did well out of the Depression, corraling a

crowd of Houston bankers to club together and bail out the system locally. Then in January 1932 he agreed to do the RFC job to duplicate, on a national scale, what he had done in Texas. He despised the East Coasters, who he thought had made a mess of things. One of his sayings was `Most of the country lies west of the Hudson and none of it east of the Atlantic ocean.'

Jones recognized that banking was the key to recovery, insofar as anything was. The RFC under Hoover had lent over $2 billion to big banks, but they had used the money to straighten out their own affairs, rather than to reinvest. FDR's first important step, under Jones' advice, was to make a virtue of the banks shutting their doors by declaring them shut by law, what was called a `Banker's Holiday.' This was done, significantly, under an old Wilsonian wartime measure, the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917. The closure was followed by the Emergency Banking Relief Act (1933), the first and probably the most important measure of the entire New Deal. It was FDR's great advantage that he had a large and subservient—and frightened—Democratic majority in both Houses of Congress. The majority put through this key Act in less than a day, after a mere forty—minute debate interrupted by cries of `Vote, vote!' This Act allowed banks to reopen with presidential powers to safeguard shareholders and depositors, authority being given to decide which should continue in business. It liquidated just over a thousand, or 5 percent, and gave the rest a federal certificate of soundness. This restored America's confidence in the nation's banks, the first step in getting cash and savings circulating again. The RFC, in return, got bank stock, making it a major shareholder in banks and so moved `the center of American banking from Wall Street to Washington.'

As chairman of the RFC, Jones acquired, and exercised, wide powers under the 1933 Act. He despised Eastern bankers and enjoyed swearing at them. At the American Bankers Association Congress at Chicago on September 5, 1933, he told them: `Take the government into partnership with you in providing the credit the country is sadly in need of.' They sat totally silent, radiating disapproval. That evening, at a private party, he told them: `Half the banks in this room are insolvent,' and reminded them that the `road to solvency' now lay through Washington. His greatest joy in life was to scold and scare bankers from Ivy League colleges. He put further screws on the banks by making it necessary for them to take out credit insurance from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. This was an old idea of William Jennings Bryan, which Jones had heard the old `Silver Eagle' expound. FDR was against it, an example of how he was not always in charge of his own New Deal. It was done behind his back by Jones and the VicePresident, Garner. Garner deprecated his own office, saying that the vice—presidency was `not worth a saucer of warm spit.' But on this and other occasions he proved much more instrumental than FDR knew, or would have wished. Garner, like Jones, came from Texas and was also, through his wife's inheritance, a banker—millionaire. While Jones was big, he was short, with large bushy eyebrows, a white thatch, beaver teeth. Like Jones, he swore constantly and thunderously. They also shared a taste for liquor—whiskey and branch water. `Cactus Jack' and `the Emperor Jones' used to meet in a room set aside for Jones in the Capitol building where he could drink and play poker with the legislators, and broker deals.

Jones called himself, and encouraged others to do so, `Uncle Jesse.' In turn, it was said of him that he was `the first financial pirate to realize that the new field of opportunity lay in public service'—hence his unofficial title, the `Economic Emperor of America.' Jones eventually possessed himself of Hoover's old job as secretary of commerce, and piled up other titles, heading the Federal Loan Administration, the RFC Mortgage

Company, the Disaster Loan Corporation, the Federal National Mortgage Corporation, the Export—Import Bank, the Federal Housing Administration, the Census Bureau, the Bureau of Standards, the Civil Aeronautics Board, the Patent Office, the Coast and Geodetic Survey—plus another four important posts he added during World War Two. Never before had one man possessed so much public power in a democratic society.

Jones, therefore, incarnated the state capitalism which Hoover prefigured and FDR actually introduced. The President played his own part, which was presentational. At the end of his first week in office he showed his mastery of the new radio medium by inaugurating his 'fireside chats.' In terms of political show—business he had few equals. His regular press conferences were exciting and he boasted that at them he played things by ear. He compared himself to a quarter—back who `called a new play when he saw how the last one had turned out.' His attempt to restore confidence and good humor received a huge boost at midnight on April 6, 1933 when, after a mere month in office, he had America drinking legally again. His own economic moves were confused and often contradictory. He increased federal spending in some directions and cut it in others. Thus he halved the pensions of totally disabled war veterans from $40 to $20 a month and put pressure on the states to slash teachers' salaries, which he said were `too high.' He remained devoted to the idea of a balanced budget—he had never heard of Keynes, who, then and later, meant nothing to him—and urged Congress in his first Message to make major cuts in expenditure. One of the first Bills he sponsored was a balanced—budget measure entitled `To Maintain the Credit of the United States Government.' Nothing made him more angry than journalists' suggestions that his financial policy was `unsound.'

Roosevelt's most distinctive personal contribution to ending the Depression was to buy gold, in the mistaken belief that by upping the gold price (that is, devaluing the dollar) he helped farm prices. This was delayed by a constitutional argument about whether the President could buy gold anyway. In October, the Attorney—General ruled that the Treasury Secretary had the power to buy gold on the open market. Thereafter, starting on October 25, 1933, there took place every morning, in the President's bedroom, while he ate his breakfast egg lying in state in his vast mahogany four—poster (no sign of Eleanor; she had a very separate bedroom), a curious ceremony called `setting the price of gold.' This was done by FDR, Jones, and Henry Morgenthau Jr (1891—1967), who succeeded the sick Woodin as Treasury secretary. FDR's aim seems to have been to keep the American gold price ahead of London and Paris, and he delighted in his deviousness. He told his colleagues: `Never let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.' Morgenthau: `Which hand am I, Mr President?' `My right hand, but I keep my left hand under the table.' The downside of FDR's useful cheerfulness in public was what was often an unseemly levity, not to say frivolity, in private, when serious business was to be done. Fiddling with the gold price, though it amused FDR and gave him a sense of power over events, did not help the farmers, or indeed anyone else.

Apart from Jones' banking policy, which succeeded, Roosevelt's legislation, for the most part, extended or tinkered with Hoover policies. The Loans to Industry Act of June 1934 merely extended Hoover's RFC. The Home Owners Loan Act of 1933 added to a similar Act of 1932. The Sale of Securities Act (1933) and the Banking Act (1935), plus the Securities Exchange Act (1934), continued Hoover's attempts to reform business methods. The National Labor Relations Act (1935), the 'Wagner Act,' made it much easier to organize unions and won the Democrats organized labor for a generation. But it was, in fact, an extension and broadening of the Norris—La Guardia Act passed under

Hoover—and it is hard to see what it did to get people back to work, though it greatly increased the power of full—time union officials. FDR's first Agricultural Adjustment Act (1933) actually undermined the reflationary aspects of government policy, curtailed food production, and paid farmers to take land out of cultivation, a policy of despair. It contradicted other government measures to counter the drought and dust storms of 1934—5, such as the creation of the Soil Conservation Service, the Soil Conservation Act (1935), the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act (1936), and other measures. FDR's agricultural policy was designed to win votes by raising farming incomes, but it also raised food prices for the consumer and this delayed the general recovery. The National Industrial Recovery Act (1933), which created an agency under General Hugh Johnson, was in essence a Hoover—type shot at `indicative planning.' But, drawing on FDR's wartime experience, his chief source of inspiration, it had an element of compulsion about it, Johnson warning businessmen that if they ignored his `voluntary' codes, they would get `a sock right on the nose.' That led Hoover to denounce it as `totalitarian.' Johnson's bullying made the scheme counterproductive and there was not much administration regret when the Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional.

FDR really departed from Hooverism when he revived a World War One Wilson scheme, and extended it, to provide cheap power for the Tennessee Valley. As we have seen, the Californians had pointed the way, though plans to do something about taming Muscle Shoals had been laid well back in the 19th century. The Shoals mark the point at which the Tennessee River plunges 134 feet into northern Alabama, creating rocky stretches of fierce shallow water for 37 miles. FDR decided to go ahead with the operation, appointing an expert on conservation, water control and drainage called A. E. Morgan as head of the new Tennessee Valley Authority. But the real dynamo of the project (Morgan, a difficult man, was eventually sacked) was a public—power man called David Lilienthal, who was the real engineer of the TVA with a rollicking competitive instinct. He picked as chief electrical engineer Llewellyn Evans, who made TVA cheap rates famous. The Wilson Dam was used to provide vast quantities of cheap power to the fury of private sources, which had traditionally overcharged. The TVA rate was $2 to $2.75 a Kw—hour, against a national average of $5.5. This began the industrial and agricultural transformation of a huge area. It was also a spectacular piece of engineering—the flood—control system is so well designed that the turbulent Tennessee River can be shut off instantly like a tap. The project thus received intense national and international coverage, all of it favorable, which persuaded many that state capitalism worked and that it was all FDR's idea.

It was Roosevelt's greatest constructive triumph, and won him the regard of the liberals and progressives, which continues to this day. But as Walter Lippmann pointed out at the time (1935), in all essentials the New Deal continued the innovatory corporatism of Hoover, using public money to bolster private credit and activity, what Lippmann called the `permanent New Deal': `The policy initiated by President Hoover in the autumn of 1929 was something utterly unprecedented in American history. The national government undertook to make the whole economic order operate prosperously ... the Roosevelt measures are a continuous evolution of the Hoover measures.' They were somewhat larger in scale. FDR spent $10.5 billion on public works, plus $2.7 billion on sponsored projects, employing at one time or another 8.5 million people and constructing 122,000 public buildings, 77,000 new bridges, 285 airports, 664,000 miles of roads, 24,000 miles of storm and water—sewers, plus parks, playgrounds, and

reservoirs. But then he was in power much longer than Hoover and had a more compliant Congress to provide the money.

If Hoover—Roosevelt interventionism was thus a continuum, the question arises, Why did it not work better? Pro—Roosevelt historians argue that the additional elements FDR brought to the continuum worked the miracle, enabling the New Deal to initiate recovery. ProHoover historians argue that Roosevelt's acts, if anything, delayed what Hoover's were already bringing about.' A third possibility is that both administrations, by their meddlesome activism, impeded a natural recovery brought about by deflation: from the perspective at the end of the century, that seems the most probable explanation. The truth is, the recovery was slow and feeble. The only reasonably good year was 1937, when unemployment at 14.3 percent dipped below 8 million; but by the end of the year the economy was in free fall againthe fastest fall so far recorded—and unemployment was at 19 percent in 1938. In 1937 production briefly passed 1929 levels, but soon slipped below again. The real recovery from the boom atmosphere of the 1920s came only on the Monday after the Labor Day weekend of September 1939 when news of the war in Europe plunged the New York Stock Exchange into a joyful confusion which finally wiped out the traces (though not the memory) of October 1929. Two years later, with America on the brink of war itself, the dollar value of production finally passed the 1929 levels for good. If interventionism worked, it took nine years and a world war to demonstrate the fact.

The recovery in other Western economies was also slow and uncertain. The exception was Germany, where the new Nazi regime of Adolf Hitler came to power at almost exactly the same time as Roosevelt. Germany's Depression unemployment figures had been even worse than America's, and its rapid return to full employment was certainly due in part to state intervention, though mainly to the recovery of business confidence, which trusted Hitler to abolish free trade unionism, as he did. In the US business confidence did not recover till World War Two broke out. Wall Street and the business community had disliked Hoover more and more as his presidency progressed. But they positively hated Roosevelt from the start. There were many reasons for this: his benevolence towards Big Labor, the way in which Jesse Jones went out of his way to revile bankers, especially East Coast ones, the composition of FDR's Cabinet and, still more, his kitchen cabinet or `brains trust,' his anti—business remarks, both in public and in private, which circulated widely, and the general feeling that he was anxious to `get' men who made fortunes out of the financial and entrepreneurial system. The man whom FDR appointed to run the Securities and Exchange Commission, intended to clean up the financial markets, was Joe Kennedy of Boston, a big Democratic wheeler—dealer, paymaster, and fund—raiser but a crook and known to be such: his personality horrified the stiffer elements in Wall Street. Indeed, FDR himself called Kennedy `a very dangerous man' and said he had him `watched hourly.' There was also the feeling that FDR was prepared to pursue vendettas against individual businessmen, making unlawful use of federal agencies, such as the IRS, the Secret Service, and the FBI, as well as the New Deal creations.

FDR's willingness to use the income—tax authorities to harass those on his `enemies list' is now well established. It was less well known, though suspected, at the time. One of FDR's income—tax vendettas was quite open. For reasons which are obscure, he hated Andrew Mellonwho had been Treasury Secretary under Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover—both personally and as a symbol. Mellon epitomized the 1920 Republican slogan, `More business in government, less government in business,' and no man was more identified

with, or responsible for, Twenties prosperity, with all its strengths and weaknesses. Mellon had amassed a great art collection, which he bequeathed to the nation, founding and endowing in the process the National Gallery of Art in Washington (1937), which became one of the world's most magnificent public museums. Indeed it is probably true to say that Mellon did more for public culture in the United States than any other individual, though his son Paul Mellon, whose largesse created the great school of art history at Yale, ran him close. The donations, made through the A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, enabled Mellon to reduce his personal tax liability, though the pictures remained in his custody during his lifetime. FDR seized on this fact to have the IRS witchhunt Mellon through the courts for evasion of tax for the rest of his life. Mellon's son—in—law, David Bruce, though a lifetime Democrat from an old Democratic family, accompanied Mellon to all the court hearings and grew to hate FDR, the `dictator' as he called him. When a grand jury, mainly of working men, refused to indict Mellon on criminal charges, FDR insisted that the government proceed with a civil case, which dragged on and on until the old man died."' Nothing did FDR's reputation with the business and financial elite more harm than this obvious persecution of an upright man who had rendered the state long and faithful service, according to his lights.

If FDR's hostility to business delayed recovery, it did him no harm at all with the intellectual community. He demonstrated the curious ability of the aristocratic *rentier* liberal (as opposed to self—made plebeians like Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover) to enlist the loyalty and even the affection of the clerisy. Many of the newspaper owners hated Roosevelt, but a large majority of their journalists admired him, forgiving his frequent lies and his malicious private injunctions to them to give some of his administration colleagues a `hard time.' They deliberately suppressed damaging facts about him. The mere suspicion that Harding played poker had damned him. But the fact that FDR played the game with journalists was never printed. There were many dark corners in the Roosevelt White House, a comfortless, cheerless place. Disease left FDR stricken but as handsome and virile as ever. He seems to have needed mothering, which he certainly did not get from Eleanor, and turned instead to the women of his entourage, some of whom became mistresses of a sort.

It was widely believed by Eleanor's many enemies, even at the time (though the suspicion never got into print), that she became a lesbian. If so, she was bisexual, for she was devoted to her bodyguard, Earl Miller, described as `large, handsome, athletic and brazen.' She permitted him a lot of physical familiarities even in public and at one time thought of running off with him. But all her most intimate friends were clever, active women, her favorites being Marion Dickerman and, above all, Nancy Cook. She seems to have fallen for Cook simply by talking to her on the phone. When they first met in person, Eleanor presented Cook with a bouquet of violets, then an international symbol of affection among proto—feminist women. One of her lady—friends, Lorena Hickok, actually lived in the White House, sleeping on a daybed in Eleanor's sitting—room. In 1924 the FBI, under its new and hyperactive director, J. Edgar Hoover (1895—1972), opened a file on Eleanor and it gradually expanded to become one of the fattest in the entire secret archive. All her life she was a passionate supporter of progressive causes, some of them infantile and dangerous, and her propensity to fall into far—left propaganda traps increased with age. President Eisenhower spoke of `trying to save the United States from Eleanor Roosevelt.' But so long as FDR was alive, and for his benefit, she enjoyed the protection of the press.

FDR's appeal to intellectuals was based on the news that he employed a `brains trust.' In fact this too was largely myth. Of his kitchen cabinet, only Rexford Tugwell, Harry Hopkins, a social worker and not an intellectual as such, and Felix Frankfurter were radical as well as influential. In any case, Tugwell and Frankfurter disagreed violently, Tugwell being a Stalinist—type large—scale statist, Frankfurter an anti—business trust—buster. They symbolized in turn the First New Deal (1933—6) and the Second New Deal (1937—8), which were flatly contradictory. There was no intellectual coherence to the Roosevelt administration at any time, but it seemed a place where the clerisy could feel at home. Among the able young who came to Washington to serve FDR in one capacity or another were Dean Acheson, who found FDR's first—name—calling `condescending,' Abe Fortas—FDR could never remember his surname though he was always 'Abe'—Hubert Humphrey, Adlai Stevenson, William Fulbright, Henry Fowler, and, not least, Alger Hiss, who held meetings with four other New Deal members of a Communist cell in a Connecticut Avenue music studio. Another young man on whom FDR's favor fell was Lyndon B. Johnson from Texas, a former schoolteacher who came to Congress full of enthusiasm, cunning, and sharp practice in 1937. FDR loved him and seems to have regarded him as his natural successor at some future date. In 1944 he used his executive authority, unlawfully and unconstitutionally, to save Johnson from going to jail for criminal tax fraud.

Attacks on FDR seemed only to consolidate his hold over the intelligentsia. A case in point was the great libertarian scribe H. L. Mencken of Baltimore (1880—1956), perhaps the most prolific and (in his day, especially the 1920s) the most influential American writer of all. In addition to writing and rewriting *The American Language*, the first systematic catalog of the American idiom, published in 1919 and thereafter reissued in many expanded editions up to 1948, plus thirty other books, editing *The Smart Set* and the *American Mercury*, Mencken produced over io million words of journalism, chiefly in the Baltimore *Morning Herald* and the Baltimore Sun, and wrote over 100,000 letters (between 60 and 125 per working day)—all this produced with two fingers on a small Corona typewriter the size of a large cigar box.

Mencken believed, along with many Americans of his age—and many now—that all governments tended to become enemies of the people, in that they insisted on doing what ordinary citizens could do far better for themselves. The formative event of his existence was his discovery, aged nine, of *Huckleberry Finn*, which he regarded as a great, realistic poem to American rugged individualism: `probably the most stupendous event in my whole life.' He was Mark Twain's successor, but a more political animal altogether. He was the first scourge of American religious fundamentalism, and of what he regarded as its progeny, Prohibition, which he took to be an ignorant rural conspiracy against the pleasures of the more sophisticated townsman. But his most persistent venom was reserved for federal Washington and its presidents. From the early years of the century up to the Great Depression he was, in Walter Lippmann's words, `the most powerful personal influence on this whole generation of educated people.' Most Americans usually spoke respectfully of the President, even if they had voted for someone else, but Mencken's excoriations of the Chief Magistrate were relished as embodying the right of the citizen to commit *lese—majeste*. And Mencken carried this right to its limits. Theodore Roosevelt was `blatant, crude, overly confidential, devious, tyrannical, vainglorious and sometimes quite childish.' Taft's principal characteristics were his `native laziness and shiftlessness.' Wilson was `the perfect model of the Christian cad' who wished to impose `a Cossack despotism' on the nation. Harding was a 'stonehead,'

Coolidge `petty, sordid and dull ... a cheap and trashy fellow ... almost devoid of any notion of honor ... a dreadful little cad.' Hoover had `a natural instinct for low, disingenuous, fraudulent manipulators.' These fusillades enthralled the intelligentsia and helped to undermine the reputations of the men assailed.

Mencken excelled himself in attacking the triumphant FDR, whose whiff of fraudulent collectivism filled him with genuine disgust. He was the `Fiihrer,' the `Quack,' surrounded by `an astonishing rabble of impudent nobodies,' `a gang of half—educated pedagogues, nonconstitutional lawyers, starry—eyed uplifters and other such sorry wizards.' His New Deal was a `political racket,' a `series of stupendous bogus miracles,' with its `constant appeals to class envy and hatred,' treating government as `a milch—cow with 125 million teats' and marked by `frequent repudiations of categorial pledges.' The only consequence was that Mencken himself forfeited his influence with anyone under thirty, and was himself denounced in turn as a polecat, a Prussian, a British toady, a howling hyena, a parasite, a mangy mongrel, an affected ass, an unsavory creature, putrid of soul, a public nuisance, a literary stink—pot, a mountebank, a rantipole, a vain hysteric, an outcast, a literary renegade, and a trained elephant who wrote the gibberish of an imbecile. The failure of Mencken's assaults against FDR—and his demotion to a back number in consequence—reflected the feelings of helplessness of most Americans in the face of the appalling and mysterious Depression. Far from trusting to the traditional American ability to fend for oneself, the children of the slump turned trustingly, almost despairingly, to the state, to Big Government, to save, nourish, and protect them. This was a sea—change, and FDR, the embodiment of smiling state geniality, was its beneficiary.

The younger generation, whose spokesmen were the intellectuals of the Thirties, positively relished the paranoia which FDR evoked among the rich and the conventional and laughed at the extraordinary vehemence and fertility of invention with which the President was assailed. Rumor claimed he was suffering from an Oedipus Complex, a `Silver Cord Complex,' heart—trouble, leprosy, syphilis, incontinence, impotence, cancer, comas, and that his polio was `inexorably ascending to his head.' He was called a Svengali, a Little Lord Fauntleroy, a simpleton, a modern Political Juliet `making love to the people from a White House balcony,' a pledge—breaker, a Communist, a tyrant, an oathbreaker, a Fascist, a socialist, the Demoralizer, the Panderer, the Violator, the Embezzler, petulant, insolent, rash, ruthless, blundering, a sorcerer, a callow upstart, a shallow aristocrat, a man who encouraged swearing in his entourage, who himself used `low slang,' and who was, withal a `suhiuwanr of the human spirit.' Crossing the Atlantic on the *Europa* shortly before the 1936 election, the novelist Thomas Wolfe said that, when he admitted he proposed to vote for the Monster, `boiled shirts began to roll up their backs like windowshades. Maidenly necks, which a moment before were as white and graceful as the swan's, became instantly so distended with the energies of patriotic rage that diamond dog—collars and ropes of pearls snapped and went flying like so many pieces of string. I was told that if I voted for this vile Communist, this sinister fascist, this scheming and contriving socialist and his gang of conspirators I had no longer any right to consider myself an American citizen.'

Against this background of rage among the financial and social elites, FDR transformed the Democrats from the minority into the majority party, which it remained for more than a generation. The 1936 election was the greatest victory in Democratic history, FDR carrying the nation by 27,751,612 to 16,681,913. His opponent, Governor Alfred M. Landon of Kansas (1887—1987), could not even carry his own state and had to

be content with Vermont and Maine (so much for the old wiseacre slogan, `As Maine goes, so goes the nation'). The Democrats piled up an enormous majority in the House, 334 to 89, so large indeed that some of the victors had to sit on the Republican benches, and they won the Senate 75 to 17.

The scale of the victory was more apparent than real, at least from FDR's viewpoint. It tended to increase the political power of the bigcity bosses more than his own. They pandered to his desire to break the old two—term presidential rule, and to run for a third term in 194o and a fourth in 1944, using him as a vote—getter but consolidating their own power under his waning shadow. In 1940 FDR was pitted against Wendell L. Willkie (1892—1944), head of a utility company and lifelong Democrat who emerged suddenly as a prominent critic of the New Deal and was picked by the Republicans to break the Roosevelt spell. He did considerably better than Landon, carrying ten states and increasing the Republican vote to 22,305,198, but FDR still racked up almost as many votes as in 1936, 27,244,160, thus winning by a 5 million plurality with an electoral college majority of 449 to 82. In 1944, FDR ran yet again, but the party bosses were strong enough to force him to abandon his Vice—President, Henry A. Wallace (1888—1965), and to coopt instead an experienced product of the Missouri Democratic machine, Harry S. Truman (1884—1972). The Republicans ran Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York (1902—71), who hung on to 22,006,285 votes while FDR's total shrank by nearly 2 million to 25,602,504. But the electoral college was still overwhelmingly Democratic, 432 to 99, and the winning formula, the South plus the big cities, remained intact.

The Democratic hegemony enabled FDR, with some diffidence, and the party bosses and his more radical associates with considerable enthusiasm, to lay the foundations of an American welfare state. From the inception of the New Deal, some federal money had gone direct to individuals, for the first time in American history, through the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. In addition, the Civil Works Administration, the Works Progress Administration, and the National Youth Administration provided relief work to the unemployed on projects fully and directly funded by US federal agencies. However, the passage of the Social Security Act (1935) introduced a specific and permanent system of federal welfare, on a two—track basis. One track insured participating employees against unemployment and old age (dependants and the disabled were later brought under the umbrella of secured income), and this track was seen as a legitimate, contributory arrangement, and its participants were not stigmatized. The second track provided federal funds to the states, under matching arrangements, for specific categories of the needy. It was means—tested and its benefits, awarded at levels kept below the prevailing income standards in any given community, were seen as unearned charity rather than entitlements—at any rate in the moral climate of the 1930s and 1940s.

It is useful at this point to look forward and see how this Rooseveltian plinth was used by Congress as the foundation for a huge superstructure of transfer payments to the needy. The original pension program, for instance, reflected FDR's fiscal conservatism: funding for the pensions was to be raised entirely through taxes on employers and employees, and the size of the pension was to reflect individual contributions. Many categories of persons were excluded, for one reason or another, and no pension was to be paid before 1942, to allow funds to accumulate. However, as early as 1939 Congress amended the scheme to authorize the payment of the first pensions in 1940. Later amendments, 1950—72, broadened the coverage enormously, substantially increased the

real value of benefits, indexed them against future inflation, and made the federal government the principal guarantor of the scheme, irrespective of its contributory funding. In addition, other forms of welfare were added by Congress. Unemployment insurance was brought into existence by taxes on employer payrolls. More important still, means—tested public assistance was granted, and federally funded, to categories of needy people such as the elderly poor, the handicapped, the blind, and dependent children in single—parent families. In 1950 Congress amended what had become known as ADC to AFDC, to include direct grants to the lone parent (usually a woman) as well as to dependent children. In 1962 an Act of Congress separated funding for AFDC from the Social Security Administration and made it into an independent program, state—administered but operating mainly from federal funds. By 1993 this had become the second—largest public assistance program, covering over 5 million households with 9.6 million children (one in eight of all children). By this date fewer than i percent of AFDC parents were required to work and half of AFDC faniilies remained dependent on welfare for ten years or more. No other use of federal money attracted so much comment and criticism, and accusations that it encouraged a `dependency culture.'

Further tiers were added progressively. Towards the end of FDR's second term, the first food—stamp plan was adopted and tried out at Rochester, New York, on May 16, 1939. This allowed purchasers of too stamps to received 150 stamps' worth of surplus agricultural stocks from the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation. By late 1940 it yeas operating in over l00 cities, was suspended during World War Ttyo food—rationing, and was then resurrected by the 1964 Food Stamp Act as part of Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society program. As a result it became even more widely used (and costly) than the AFDC program. By 1982 stamps worth $10.2 billion were being issued. By 1994, over 26 millions in 11 million households—10 percent of the population received food stamps costing $24 billion, of which the Secret Service estimated over $2 billions' worth were obtained fraudulently.

To the food—stamp program was added a series of measures to provide medical care for the poor, beginning with `Medicare,' assistance to persons retired under social security (1965). `Medicaid' payments to providers of health care `to persons otherwise unable to afford them' (1965) and not entitled to Medicare were also provided by the same Act of Congress. Medicare reimbursed most medical expenses for about 19 million persons over sixty—five and others receiving long—term social security benefits. The program, which came into operation on July 1, 1966, greatly exceeded original cost projections. By 1980 spending on Medicare had risen to $35 billion annually, and it contillued to increase rapidly in the 1980s, reaching $132 billion annually by 1992. Combined outlays on Medicare and Medicaid, which had been 5 percent of total federal spending under the original Great Society projections, rose to 17 percent of spending in I994.

The fact that these additions to the original modest social security program established under FDR were added under the Great Society program of Lyndon Johnson confirmed the accuracy of FDR's prediction that Johnson was his natural successor and placed the Great Society in its true historical context as the logical successor of the New Deal. Both New Deal and Great Society also underlined the historical tendency of welfare programs to expand under their own power and, without any specific decision by the electorate, or the conscious wish of those governing on its behalf, to overwhelm society by the magnitude of the burden imposed and by huge social sequences—such as the creation of

lifetime and indeed hereditary dependency—wholly unforeseen and unwished by those who initiated the process.

The creation of the prototype welfare state under FDR and other aspects of the New Deal inevitably ran into legal and constitutional difficulties. The Supreme Court, under Chief Justice Charles E. Hughes (1862—1948), ruled unconstitutional the National Industrial Recovery Act, the Railroad Retirement Act, and the Agricultural Adjustment Act. Furious at what he saw as the political opposition of elderly justices out of tune with the electorate, and flushed by his immense victory in November 1936, FDR submitted to Congress, on February 5, 1937, as the first Act under his new mandate, a judiciary Reorganization Bill, immediately dubbed by its opponents a court—packing plan. This proposed that the federal judiciary be expanded by adding one new judge for each sitting justice over the age of seventy, creating a total of fifty new judgeships, including six on the Supreme Court, all of them (of course) to be appointed by the President. The Bill was introduced primarily as a measure to streamline judicial action at the federal level, but it was plainly intended to swamp a conservative judiciary with new and radical appointments.

Behind FDR's plan was a new kind of progressive, government lawyer, a breed which had grown up under the influence of justice Brandeis and Felix Frankfurter. Brandeis, the first Jew on the Supreme Court (served 1916—39), had made himself a millionaire by the age of fifty as a corporation lawyer. But he always urged young lawyers to `serve the public purpose,' either locally or in Washington, rather than to set out in pursuit of big fees. He was not a centralizer, and therefore was in some respects out of sympathy with the New Deal. But he was the model for an entire generation of young men of law, and his influence was such that FDR, shortly after being elected president in November 1932, paid a call on him to ask advice. More directly influential was the man Brandeis called 'half—brother, half—son,' Felix Frankfurter (1882—1962). Frankfurter had emigrated to America at the age of six, got his law degree at Harvard, taught there for a quartercentury—was indeed perhaps the most influential law professor in US history—and was constantly in and out of Washington jobs. He was part of FDR's inner circle (until his appointment to the Supreme Court in 1939) and perhaps his most important role was to persuade brilliant young lawyers to come to Washington to work in one or other of FDR's new agencies. He was an inspired networker—his wife said, 'Felix has 200 Best Friends'—publicist, and self—publicist. It was Frankfurter's great achievement to establish, at any rate for one generation of the young, the moral superiority of public service over private enterprise. He became and for a decade remained a clever and indefatigable recruiter of able young men, ranging from David Lilienthal and Alger Hiss to Dean Acheson.

Many of these young lawyers, as was pointed out constantly at the time, were Jews, and it is a fact that FDR, despite his constant antisemitic remarks, befriended and promoted more Jews than any other president before or since. Hence the assertions that his real name was 'Rosenfeld' and that his program was the `Jew Deal.' It has been worked out that Jews made up about 15 percent of his top appointments. But FDR's reply to criticism was that he would happily appoint more non—Jews if they were suitable and willing. He told a Christian friend: `Dig me up fifteen or twenty youthful Abraham Lincolns from Manhattan and the Bronx to choose from. They must be liberal from belief and not from lip service. They must have an inherent contempt both for the John W. Davieses and the Max Steurs. They must know what life in a tenement means. They must have no social ambitions.' In fact, most of the New Deal Jews, such as Lilienthal, David

Niles, Jerome Frank, and Benjamin Cohen, did not come from poor backgrounds. The only one who did was Abe Fortas.

Among the leading young alumni of law schools at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and other Ivy League colleges, Washington now presented itself—to Jews and Wasps alike—as the high road to fame, power, and excitement (and eventually to fortune too). So they flocked there, and were recognized and rewarded and promoted, and given huge responsibilities, both open and hidden. The Roosevelt regime stimulated the rise of a new kind of political lawyer who, in pursuit of the public good, specialized in the writing and interpretation and enforcement of federal laws and regulations—thus in turn promoting the rise of a new kind of corporation lawyer, who specialized in compliance with and circumvention of such laws and regulations. In due course lawyers arose who specialized in operating on both sides of the fence, being in turn gamecepers and poachers. The New Deal, then, while benefiting various itegories of society, had a direct and long—term effect in enlarging the ower, numbers, and incomes of lawyers. We shall have more to say bout this later.

In the meantime, among the young lawyers in and out of the White House in these years, antagonism towards what was seen as a reactionary Supreme Court was strong, and they fueled FDR's own anger. But FDR's Bill was a mistake. He miscalculated, perhaps for the first and last time on this scale, the tenor of public feeling. He was accused of seeking to subvert the Constitution and destroy the independence of the judiciary. Many of those who actually agreed with the President that changes in the federal judiciary were needed thought that a step of this importance should be taken by constitutional amendment, not by a simple statute. FDR antagonized some of his most fervent supporters by declining to consult with them in framing the measure, and by refusing to alter it once it was tabled. In fact it was unnecessary. On May *24,* 1937, the Supreme Court showed that it was not against the New Deal as a whole by upholding the Social Security Act in *Steward Machine Company v. Davis* and *Helvering v. Davis.* Other New Deal measures, such as the National Labor Relations Act, were also found constitutional between March and May 1937.

The drive behind the Bill faltered with the death of its chief advocate, Senator Joseph Robinson. FDR and his Congressional supporters were forced to compromise and leave the number of federal justices unchanged. Instead, in August 1937, a new and harmless measure, the Judicial Procedure Reform Act, was quickly passed by Congress. As it happened, FDR need not have got himself into this mess, his first real defeat and a lasting blemish on his reputation. In 1937—9, death or retirement eliminated four of the most conservative associate justices of the Court. By 1941 seven out of nine justices were FDR appointments, including such liberals as Hugo Black (1886—1971*),* William O. Douglas (1898—1980), and Felix Frankfurter himself.

Arguments over the Supreme Court, and indeed over the New Deal and the continuing Depression themselves, were overshadowed by the world crisis radiating from Europe, which opened World War Two in September 1939. The United States was an extremely reluctant participant in the Second World War, more so indeed than in the First. At no point did the United States choose to go to war against the Axis powers and Japan. War was forced upon it by the Japanese assault on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and by declarations of war by Germany and Italy four days later. It is a myth that FDR was anxious to bring America into the war, and was prevented from doing so by the overwhelming isolationist spirit of the American people. The evidence shows that FDR was primarily concerned with his domestic policies and had no wish to join in a crusade against Nazism or totalitarianism or indeed against international aggression. He took no positive steps to involve the United States in the conflict. The war came

as much of a surprise—and an unwelcome surprise—to him as to anyone else. There is a persistent myth that he was forewarned about the Japanese aggression at Pearl Harbor, and did nothing to forestall it, being anxious that American participation in the global conflict should be precipitated by this unprovoked act of aggression. That all kinds of warnings were in the air at the time is clear. But an objective survey of all the evidence indicates that Pearl Harbor came as a real and horrifying shock to all the members of the Roosevelt administration, beginning with the President himself.

It is also a myth, however, that America's unwillingness to engage in World War Two—the polls show that about 80 percent of the adult population wished America to remain neutral until the Pearl Harbor assault—sprang from a deep sense of isolationism, which was America's pristine and natural posture in world affairs. This myth is so persistent that it has led in the 1990s to a demand to `a return to isolationism,' as though that were America's destiny and natural preference. So it is worth examining in a longer historical context. There is nothing unique, as many Americans seem to suppose, in the desire of a society with a strong cultural identity to minimize its foreign contacts. On the contrary; isolationism in this sense has been the norm wherever geography has made it feasible. A characteristic example was ancient Egypt, which, protected by deserts, sought to pursue an isolationist policy for 3,000 years, usually with success. In their ideographs and hieroglyphs, the Egyptians made an absolute distinction between themselves, as Egyptians and human beings, and others, who were not categorized as persons in the same sense. A more recent example of a hermit state is Japan, which tried to use its surrounding seas to pursue a policy of total isolation, again reflected in its ideograms. China, too, was isolationist for thousands of years, albeit an empire at the same time. The British were habitually isolationist even during the centuries when they were acquiring an empire embracing a quarter of the world's surface. The British always regarded the English Channel as a *cordon sanitaire* to protect them from what they saw as the Continental disease of war. The Spanish too were misled by the Pyrenees, and the Russians by the Great Plains, into believing that isolationism was feasible as well as desirable.

The United States, however, has always been an internationalist country. Given the sheer size of the Atlantic (and the Pacific), with its temptation to hermitry, the early colonists and rulers of the United States were remarkably international—minded. The Pilgrim Fathers did not cut themselves off from Europe, but sought to erect a `City on a Hill' precisely to serve as an example to the Old World. The original Thirteen Colonies had, as a rule, closer links with Europe than with each other, focusing on London and Paris, rather than on Boston or Philadelphia. Benjamin Franklin had perhaps a better claim to be called a cosmopolitan than any other 18th—century figure on either side of the Atlantic. He believed strongly in negotiations and in mutually advantageous treaties between nations. The same could be said of Thomas Jefferson. America's ruling elite was always far more open towards, interested in, and knowledgeable about the world (especially Europe) than the French Canadians to the north and the Spanish— and Portuguese—Americans to the south. Despite the oceans on both sides, the United States was from the start involved with Russia (because of Oregon and Alaska), China (because of trade), Spain, Britain, and other European powers. Isolation in a strict sense was never an option, and there is no evidence that the American masses, let alone the elites, favored it, especially once immigration widened and deepened the ties with Europe.

It is true that the United States, through most of the 19th century, was concerned with expanding its presence in the Americas rather than with global policies. But exponents of

`America First,' like John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay, and the `Manifest Destiny' chorus, were imperialists rather than isolationists. And the only time imperialism was an issue in an American presidential election was in 1900, when the Democrats used it to attack what they saw as President McKinley's expansionist policies. The voters' approval of American imperialism, if that is what it was, reflected itself in McKinley's convincing victory. Contrary to a popular belief, held by many in the United States as well as in Europe, Americans make excellent diplomats, not least because of their thoroughness. This was shown (as we have seen) at Ghent in 1814, during and after the Civil War, and not least at Versailles in 1919. And as we have also seen, the failure of the United States to make a commitment to the League of Nations and collective security in 1919—20 sprang from the obstinacy and cussedness of a sick president rather than from any widespread wish on the part of the American people or their representatives.

Between the two world wars, America sometimes appeared, in theory as well as in practice, isolationist, and much of the tragedy of World War Two is attributed to this. But, despite rejection of the League, America was certainly not isolationist in the 1920s, though its intervention in international affairs was not always prudent, particularly in the Pacific. American interest in Asia had grown steadily throughout the 19th century, and it was not only, or indeed not primarily, commercial. It was religious and cultural too. There was something in Asian culture, it has been argued, that persuaded Americans that they had a mission to intervene and change it, for the better. By the end of the 19th century, there were over 3,000 American missionaries in Siam, Burma, Japan, Korea, and, above all, China. They were joined by educationists, scientists, explorers, and technicians who taught Asians or served their governments as advisors and experts. The one Asian country which resisted Americanization was Japan, and it symbolized this rejection of American cultural notions (though not its techr the annexation of the Philippines by the United States, and the creation of an American naval base near Manila, America was, in the same sense as Britain, an Asian power as well as a Pacific naval power. That placed it in a potentially confrontational relationship with Japan. It was the same for Britain. But, whereas Britain resolved the dilemma by forming an alliance with Japan, which served an important role in World War One, when Japanese naval units provided protection for convoys transporting Australian and New Zealand forces to the Middle East and European theaters, the United States did nothing to prevent the development of hostile US Japanese relations. There were reasons for this. In the early 20th century California introduced race laws to prevent the settlement of Japanese immigrants and from 1906—8 the mass migration from Japan had been halted. So the Japanese turned to China, and sought in 1915 to turn it into a protectorate. But it was the Americans who saw themselves as the prime protectors of China, and they succeeded in halting that Japanese option too. American policy in the 1920s tended not merely to perpetuate Japanese—American hostility but to poison the relationship between Japan and Britain too. At Versailles, Wilson antagonized the Japanese by refusing to write a condemnation of racism (which had bearings on the situation in California) into the covenant of the League. Thereafter, America gave the Pacific priority in its naval policy, and in doing so put a sharp question to the British: whom do you want as your friends in the Pacific, us or the Japanese?

When the Anglo—Japanese Treaty came up for renewal in 1922, the Americans wanted it scrapped. The British government wanted to renew it. So did the Australians and the New Zealanders (and the Dutch and the French, who also had colonies in the area). They all agreed

that Japan was a `restless and aggressive power,' as the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, put it. But they were adamant that the Anglo—Japanese alliance was a stabilizing or `taming' fact, and ought to be maintained. They agreed to suppress their doubts, however, when the Americans (supported by the South Africans and Canadians) proposed as an alternative a naval conference in Washington to limit armaments, with particular reference to the Pacific. Seen in retrospect, the 1922 Washington Conference was a disaster for all concerned. With heavy misgivings, the British agreed to an American proposal for a `naval holiday,' with massive scrapping of existing warships, no new warships to be built over 35,000 tons, a 5:5:3 capital—ship ratio for Britain, the US, and Japan, and—to make the last provision acceptable to Japan—British and American agreement to build no main—fleet bases north of Singapore or west of Hawaii. The Japanese saw the agreement as the Anglo—Saxons ganging up on them, and the net result, so far as Britain was concerned, was to turn Japan from an active friend into a potential enemy. Moreover, the limitation on American naval—base construction made it impossible, in effect, for America's fleet to come to the rapid support of British, French, or Dutch possessions if they were attacked. That, in turn, caused the Japanese to regard such an assault, for the first time, as feasible, especially since the limitations on Britain's naval construction meant that its capital—ship presence in the Pacific was token rather than real. At the same time, American—Japanese relations, especially over China, continued to deteriorate.

Under President Hoover, the American government continued to play a world role, with the object of preserving peace. But its actions were usually counterproductive. In 1930, the American government persuaded the semi—pacifist Labour government in Britain to sign the London Naval Treaty, which reduced the British navy to a state of impotence it had not known since the 17th century. The American navy remained comparatively large but increasingly antiquated, and the American army, with 132,069 officers and men, was only the sixteenth—largest in the world, smaller than the armies of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Turkey, Spain, and Rumania. The Chief of Staff, General MacArthur, had the army's only limousine. At the same time, Hoover refused to veto the Smoot—Hawley tariff, which destroyed Japan's American trade, 15 percent of its exports. That, combined with the London treaty, which it signed reluctantly, completed Japan's alienation from the West, and determined its rulers, or at any rate the military cliques which in effect ran Japanese army and naval policy, to go it on their own. There followed the 1931 Japanese occupation of Manchuria and, in 1933, Japan's departure from the League of Nations. Hoover made no positive moves to oppose Japanese expansion.

When Roosevelt took over, he made matters worse. Hoover had helped to plan a world economic conference, to be held in London June 1933. It might have persuaded the `have not' powers like Japan and Germany that there were alternatives to fighting for a living. But on July 3 Roosevelt torpedoed it. Thereafter the United States did indeed move into isolation, though it was not the only great and civilized power to do so in the 1930s. The French signaled their unwillingness to get involved in further efforts to uphold collective security by build in the Maginot Line, a purely defensive gesture of defeatism in the face of German rearmament, indeed a form of military escapism. The British remained largely disarmed and sought to respond to a remilitarized Germany by appeasement. A wound—nursing flight from the demands of the world was the mood of the times, characterizing what W. H. Auden called `a low, dishonest decade.' Among the victors of World War One, fear of a second, which would invalidate all their sacrifices, was universal. In the United States, the Depression, coming after nearly seventy years

of dramatic economic expansion which had made it the richest and most powerful country on earth, abruptly reduced half the population to penury. There was an atmosphere of hysteria in parts of the United States during the middle years of the decade, not least in Washington, marked by outbreaks of that intellectual disease to which Americans are prone: conspiracy—theory.

In this atmosphere, comparatively minor figures were able to exercise disproportionate influence. One such was Dorothy Detzer, secretary of the Women's International League, and an archetypal isolationist. Detzer succeeded in stampeding the Senate towards statutory isolationism by arranging a political marriage between her favorite senator, Gerald Nye of North Dakota, and Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan. The two set up a special committee under Nye to investigate charges that the international arms trade had fomented war. Among other things, the Nye Committee supposedly proved that links between the Wilson administration, the banks, and the arms trade brought America into World War One, and that much the same forces, having failed to push America into the League, were once again plotting wars of profit. Nye was undoubtedly an isolationist of sorts, but Vandenberg was an internationalist by instinct who played a notable role during and after World War Two in creating the United Nations and securing passage of the Marshall Plan. For him, as for Americans as a whole, isolationism in the 1930s was an aberration. At the time, however, the emotional drive to cut America off from what was seen as an incorrigibly corrupt Europe was strong and gave rise to the 1935—9 Neutrality Acts.

These laws, like earlier US policies (that is, in the years 1914—17), limited the exercise of neutral rights as a way of protecting US neutrality. But their most important characteristic was that they deliberately made no distinction between aggressor and victim, both sides being simply characterized as `belligerents.' That was a complete departure from previous American policy, which had always permitted the US government to make moral distinctions between participants in foreign wars. It had the inevitable effect of favoring the aggressive dictatorships of Europe and Asia at the expense of the pacific democracies and of the victims of aggression. The first Neutrality Act (August 1935) was passed after Italy's attack on Ethiopia the previous May. It empowered the President, on finding a state of war existed, to declare an embargo on arms shipments to the belligerents and (an important point in view of experience in World War One) to declare that US citizens traveling on ships of the belligerents did so at their own risk. This Act was replaced by the Neutrality Act of February 29, 1936, which added a prohibition on extending loans or credits to belligerents. The Spanish Civil War, which broke out in July 1936, was not covered by this legislation. Hence Congress, by joint resolution, January 6, 1937, forbade supplying arms to either side in the conflict. When the 1936 law expired, the Neutrality Act of May 1, 1937, which covered civil as well as foreign wars, empowered the President to add strategic raw materials to the embargo list and actually made travel by US citizens on the ships of belligerents unlawful.

It is curious, looking back on it, that FDR, granted his enormously powerful position with opinion in 1936 and the following three years, made such little effort to prevent this legislation being enacted. The notion that he was a passionate defender of freedom throughout the world, determined to assist the forces of democracy by all the means in his power, but frustrated by an isolationist Congress, is another myth of these times. Efforts by the British government to put pressure on the White House to take a more active role in the defense of freedom against totalitarian aggression, in either Europe or Asia, were quite unavailing. The isolationist spirit in Congress was advanced as an excuse, rather than a reason, for inactivity. In fact the Neutrality Acts allowed the President a good deal of latitude in enforcing them. But the only occasion on

which FDR used the discretion given him was in July 1937, when large—scale fighting broke out between China and Japan. Since invocation of the Acts would penalize China, far more dependent on American supplies than its adversary, FDR chose not to categorize the fight as a state of war.

The President's unwillingness to stretch his credit with Congress by trying to force through modification or repeal of the Acts, as the situation in Europe and Asia worsened, was symbolized by the alienation of Bernard Baruch from the administration. Baruch, the World War One chairman of the War Industries Board, was increasingly concerned by the weakness of the former Allies in Europe and by America's lack of preparation for a conflict he saw as inevitable. There was, in theory, a `Preparedness Program' launched in 1938 but Baruch, regarded as a Jewish alarmist, was pointedly excluded from its policymaking and administration. To draw attention to his disagreements with FUR and his entourage, Baruch told reporters that he had no quarters in the White House or any administration building—his only office was a park bench in Lafayette Square, across the street.

Baruch had, however, considerable influence in Congress. After the outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939, he devised a `cash and carry' formula and persuaded Congress to incorporate it in a new Neutrality Act (November 4, 1939). Belligerents were once more permitted to buy American war supplies, but they had to pay cash and transport the goods in their own ships. The ostensible reason for this provision was that it would prevent the US from being drawn into war by holding debt in belligerent countries or by violating blockades while transporting war goods. The real reason was that the Baruch formula favored Britain, as it was intended to do. But only up to a point: the cash provision had the effect of stripping Britain of its hard currency reserves and forcing it to liquidate foreign holdings at knock—down prices.

The difficulties of providing war supplies to potential allies like Britain (France surrendered in June 1940 and left the war) was complicated by further Congressional legislation. World War One left behind it a complicated legacy of European Allied war debts, both to each other and to the US, and reparations imposed on Germany by the Versailles Treaty. By the spring of 1931 the spiraling international financial panic made it impossible for the Europeans to continue repaying their debts (or reparations). On June 20, 1931 President Hoover granted a year's moratorium. When this ran out and payments were still in default (only Finland eventually paid in full), largely as a result of the Smoot—Hawley tariff, Congress moved towards sanctions. By the beginning of 1934 the US was owed (allowing for future interest charges) nearly $22 billion. Granted the circumstances in which the debts were acquired—the delay in America's entry into the war—the statesmanlike solution would have been for Roosevelt to request Congress to cancel all the debts, which were clearly not going to be paid anyway, and were merely a source of bitterness and reproaches on both sides. But FDR does not seem to have seriously considered such a move. Moreover, when the isolationist element in Congress insisted on passing the Johnson Debt Default Act (April 13, 1934), he declined to veto it. This made it unlawful for the US government to loan money to any nation `delinquent in its war obligations.' It was clearly against US interests thus to restrict the hands of its government in a rapidly deteriorating international climate. But FDR made no effort to get the Act repealed.

Not until the beginning of 1941, when Britain was virtually the only democracy still in the ring against the totalitarian powers, did FDR, again at Baruch's urging, persuade Congress to pass the Lend—Lease Act (March 11, 1941), which circumvented both the Debt Default Act and the Neutrality Act of 1939. Lend—Lease authorized the President to transfer arms or any other defense materials for which Congress appropriated money to `the government of any country

whose defense the President deems vital to the defense of the United States.' This allowed help to be sent immediately to Britain and, in due course, to other Allied belligerents, especially Russia and China. When Lend—Lease was terminated on August a1, 1945, over $50.6 billion of aid had been sent to Britain and Russia.

The point has been dwelt upon because it indicates the extent to which the Roosevelt administration was infected by the spirit of isolationism as much as any other element in American society during the 1930s decade. Roosevelt showed himself as lacking in leadership as Baldwin and Chamberlain in Britain, or Daladier in France. It is permissible to speculate that Theodore Roosevelt, with his clearer ideas of America's responsibilities to the world, and his warmer notions of democratic solidarity, would have been more energetic in alerting the American people to the dangers which threatened them and the need for timely preparation and action, thereby saving countless American and Allied lives, and prodigious quantities of US treasure. As it was, not until November 17, 1941, after repeated confrontations with German submarines in the North Atlantic, and the actual torpedoing of the US destroyer *Reuben James*, did Congress amend the Neutrality Acts to allow US merchant vessels to arm themselves and to carry cargoes to belligerent ports. This was only three weeks before Pearl Harbor ended the tragic farce of American neutrality. Thus the United States was finally drawn into the war for the survival of democracy and international law at a time and place not of its own choosing, but of its enemy's.

Confronted with the most momentous decisions of his presidency, Roosevelt seems to have been indecisive and inclined to let events take their course. Granted the nature of the Nazi regime, war with Germany was probably unavoidable. But the Japanese regime was subject to constant osmosis, as power fluctuated between the military and civilian elements, and it is possible that war might have been avoided. On July 26, 1941, FDR was informed that Japanese forces had pushed into the French colony of Indochina, which was virtually undefended by the Vichy regime in Paris. He reacted by freezing all Japanese assets in America, which effectively barred Japan from receiving US oil supplies. Japanese policy oscillated between peace and war during the summer and early autumn, but the consensus in Tokyo was to seek a negotiated settlement. As the Naval Chief of Staff, Admiral Nagano, put it, `If I am told to fight regardless of consequences, I shall run wild considerably for six months or a year. But I have utterly no confidence in the second or third years.' The ablest of the naval commanders, Admiral Yamamoto, said that, however spectacular its early victories, Japan could not hope to win an all—out war against America and Britain. Colonel Iwakuro, a logistics expert, reported the following differentials in American and Japanese production: steel twenty to one, oil a hundred to one, coal ten to one, aircraft production five to one, shipping two to one, labor force five to one, overall ten to one.

On November 20 a peace offer was made to Washington. Japan promised to move all troops from southern Indochina into the north if, in return, America sold it a million tons of aviation fuel. FDR urged Secretary of State Cordell Hull (1871—1955) to take the offer seriously and wrote out a draft reply himself in pencil. Copies were passed to Winston Churchill and Chiang Kai—shek, both of whom protested strongly and the reply was never sent. Accordingly, six days later news reached Washington of further Japanese troop landings in Indochina, and FDR `fairly blew up,' as Hull put it. As a result, a peremptory US note was sent demanding that Japan withdraw from China and Indochina immediately. The Japanese authorities treated it as an insult and began urgent preparations for a preemptive strike, which resulted in Pearl Harbor. It is

arguable that, if US—Japanese negotiations had succeeded in postponing war over the winter of 1941—2, it might never have taken place at all. By the spring, the failure of the Nazis to take Moscow made it clear that Russia would stay in the war, and this itself might have deterred Japan from throwing in its lot with the Axis powers.

All American doubts and hesitations, however, vanished in response to the Japanese assault and the Axis war—declaration. The Japanese war—preparations were a characteristic combination of breathtaking efficiency and inexplicable muddle. General George Marshall, FDR's principal military advisor, had repeatedly assured the President that the Oahu fortress complex, which included Pearl Harbor, was the strongest in the world and that a seaborne attack was out of the question. The Japanese needed to knock out the main units of the US Pacific Fleet while their armies were racing to occupy British Malaya and the Dutch East Indies, thus providing the Japanese war effort with supplies of rubber and oil. The plan of attack on Pearl Harbor, which involved getting a gigantic carrier force unobserved over thousands of miles of ocean, was the most audacious and complex scheme of its kind in history. It was part of an even more ambitious scheme for the conquest of Southeast Asia, embracing attacks and landings over several million square miles, involving the entire offensive phase of the war Japan intended to launch. Nothing like it had ever been conceived before, in extent and complexity, and it is no wonder that Marshall discounted its magnitude and FDR brushed aside such warnings as he received. On the other hand, the Japanese had no long—term plan to defend their new conquests.

As it was, the Pearl Harbor assault achieved complete tactical surprise but its strategic results were meager. Japanese planes attacked at 7.55 A.M. on Sunday, December 7, a second wave following an hour later. All but twenty—nine Japanese planes returned safely to their carriers by 9.45 and the entire force got away without loss. The attacks destroyed half of America's military airpower in the entire theater, put out of action eight battleships, three destroyers, and three cruisers, and totally destroyed the battleships *Oklahoma* and *Arizona*: 2,323 US servicemen were killed. These results seemed spectacular at the time and served to enrage and inflame American opinion. But most of the warships were only damaged or were sunk in shallow water. Their trained crews largely escaped. The ships were quickly raised and repaired and most returned to active service to take part in major operations. The American carriers, far more important than the elderly battleships, were all out at sea at the time of the attack, and the Japanese force commander, Admiral Nagumo, calculated he had too little fuel to search for and destroy them. His bombers failed to destroy either the naval oil storage tanks or the submarine pens, so both submarines and carriers, now the key arms in the naval war, were able to refuel and operate immediately.

The limited success achieved by the Pearl Harbor attack was a woefully small military return for the political risk of treacherously attacking an enormous, intensely moralistic nation like the United States before a formal declaration of war. The tone of the American response was set by Cordell Hull, who knew all about the attack by the time the Japanese envoys handed him their message at 2.20 P.M. on the Sunday, and had rehearsed his little verdict of history (he was a former Tennessee judge): `In all my fifty years of public service I have never seen a document that was more crowded with infamous falsehoods and distortions on a scale so huge that I never imagined until today that any government on this planet was capable of uttering them.' Thus America, hitherto rendered ineffectual by its remoteness, its divisions, and its pusillanimous leadership, found itself instantly united, angry, and committed to wage total war with all its outraged strength. Adolf Hitler's reckless declaration of war the following week drew a full measure of this enormous fury down upon his own nation. Roosevelt supplied the rhetoric,

beginning with his speech to a joint session of Congress in which he proclaimed December 7 `a date which will live in infamy.'

Japan's plans to annex Southeast Asia and occupy the Philippines were successfully carried out, given some luck and poor Allied leadership. But that is as far as they got. The invasion of India, the occupation of Australia, and the assault on the United States via the Aleutians were never seriously attempted. Meanwhile, Japan's first Pacific reverse occurred much earlier than even its most pessimistic strategists had expected. On May 7—8, 1942 a Japanese invasion force heading for Port Moresby in New Guinea was engaged at long range by American carriers in the Coral Sea and so badly damaged that it had to return to base. On June 3 another invasion force heading for Midway Island was outwitted and defeated, losing four of its carriers and the flower of the Japanese naval air force. The fact that it was forced to return to Japanese home waters indicated that Japan had already effectively lost naval air—control of the Pacific.

Meanwhile, the United States had embarked on a mobilization of human, physical, and financial resources without precedent in history. All the inhibitions, frustrations, and restraints of the Depression years vanished virtually overnight. Within a single year, the number of tanks built in America had been raised to over 24,000 and planes to over 48,000. By the end of America's first year in the war, it had raised its arms production to the total of all three enemy powers put together, and by 1944 had doubled it again, while at the same time creating an army which passed the 7 million mark in 1943. During the conflict, the United States in total enrolled 11,260,000 soldiers, 4,183,466 sailors, 669,100 marines and 241,093 coastguards. Despite this vast diversion of manpower to the forces, US factories built 296,000 planes and 102,000 tanks, and US shipyards turned out 88,000 ships and landing—craft.

The astonishing acceleration in the American productive effort was made possible by the essential dynamism and flexibility of the American enterprise system, wedded to a national purpose which served the same galvanizing role as the optimism of the Twenties. The war acted as an immense bull market, encouraging American entrepreneurial skills to fling the country's seemingly inexhaustible resources of materials and manpower into a bottomless pool of consumption. Extraordinary exercises in speed took place. One reason the Americans won the Battle of Midway was by reducing what had been regarded as a three—month repair job on the carrier *Yorktown* to forty—eight hours, using 1,200 technicians working round the clock. The construction program for the new defense coordinating center, the Pentagon, with its 16 miles of corridors and 600,000 square feet of office space, was cut from seven years to fourteen months.

The man who emerged as the master of this creative entrepreneurial improvisation was Henry J. Kaiser. As one of the executants of the early New Deal, especially the TVA, he had been outstanding not merely for thinking big but for producing an endless succession of ingenious small ideas too—putting wooden tires on wheelbarrows and having them drawn by tractors, replacing petrol engines in tractors and earth—shovels with diesels, and so on. In building Grand Coulee, he had devised a special trestle, costing $1.4 million, to pour 36 million tons of concrete. He had erected the Parmemente cement plant, then the world's biggest, in six months. In the 1930s, more than any other man, he was building the economic infrastructure of the modern Western USA, and during the early 1940s he put it to the service of the war effort, making the West the principal supplier of mass—produced weaponry and advanced technology. David Lilienthal later remarked: `The fall of France made it clear that TVA must be converted to war.' The war economy, with the state the biggest purchaser and consumer, was the natural sequel to the New Deal and rescued it from oblivion.

The need for hustle on a prodigious scale also served to put back on his pedestal the American capitalist folk—hero. Henry Kaiser and his colleagues Henry Morrison and John McCone, fellow—creators of the great dams, who had been systematically harassed by FDR's Interior Secretary, Harold Ickes (1874—1952), for breaches of federal regulations, were back in business on a bigger scale than ever. Having built the largest cement plant in the world, they followed it with the first integrated steel mill. The New Deal earth—movers became the creators of the `Arsenal of Democracy'—once again, FDR's contribution to the effort was a happy phrase. The original Six Company group brought together by Kaiser entered into a partnership with Todd Shipbuilding, and set up new shipyards in Los Angeles, Houston, and Portland, Oregon. The first `Liberty Ship' they built took 196 days to deliver. Kaiser cut the time to twenty—seven days and by 1943 he was turning one out every 10.3 hours. Over 1,000 of the ships, or 52 percent, came from Pacific yards which had not existed before the war. Kaiser built the West's first steel plant, at Fontana, California, and when the government demanded 50,000 aircraft, he constructed Kaiser Aluminum, then Kaiser Magnesium, most of whose plants went to California too. (It was a tragedy for the South that it had no capitalist leader comparable to Kaiser: that is why its own thrust into the modern world was delayed by nearly two decades.) Other big companies quickly adopted the hustle—style. General Electric, in 1942 alone, raised its production of marine turbines from $1 million worth to $300 million. After the loss of the decisive battle of Guadalcanal, the Japanese Emperor Hirohito asked his Naval Chief of Staff, Admiral Nagano: `Why was it that it took the Americans only a few days to build an airbase and the Japanese more than a month?' All Nagano could say was `I am very sorry indeed.' The answer was that the Americans had a vast array of bulldozers and earth—moving equipment, the Japanese little more than muscle—power. America won the war essentially by harnessing capitalist methods to the unlimited production of firepower and mechanical manpower.

There were other important factors. One was the skillful marriage of creative brainpower and new technologies to break enemy codes. Here the Americans were able to build on British foundations. The British had been leading codebreakers for over fifty years—it was their decoding of the notorious 'Zimmerman Telegram' which had helped to bring America into World War One. The British possessed, thanks to the Poles, a reconstruction of the electrical Enigma coding machine, which had been adopted by the German army in 1926 and the German navy in 1928, and which both firmly believed, to the end, produced unbreakable cryptograms. The Enigma machine became the basis for Operation Ultra, a decoding system run from Bletchley in Buckinghamshire, which not only provided the Allies with advanced information of Axis operations but enabled high—level deception schemes to be conducted. Winston Churchill made FDR privy to Ultra immediately America entered the war, and Anglo—American intelligence, based on codebreaking, became one of the main war—winning weapons.

The Americans themselves had broken Japan's diplomatic code as early as 1940, and were much assisted by the belief of Kazuki Kamejama, head of Japan's Cable Section, that such a feat was `humanly impossible.' From January 1942, the merging of American and British code and intelligence operations led to the early breakthrough in the Pacific War—Midway in June 1942 was in many respects an intelligence victory. Thereafter, the Allies knew the positions of all Japanese capital ships nearly all the time, an inestimable advantage given the size of the Pacific naval theater. Perhaps even more important, they were able to conduct a spectacularly successful submarine offensive against Japanese supply ships. This turned the island—empire the Japanese had acquired in the first five months of the war (10 percent of the earth's surface at its greatest extent) into an untenable liability, the graveyard of the Japanese navy and merchant marine and

of some of the best of their army units. Codebreaking alone raised Japanese shipping losses by one—third.

Conversely, the breaking of the German `Triton' code at Bletchley Park in March 1943 clinched Anglo—American victory in the Battle of the Atlantic, for German U—boats continued to signal frequently, confident in their communications security, and breaking the code allowed the Allies to destroy the U—boats' supply ships too. As a result, victory in the Atlantic came quite quickly in 1943, and this was important, for the U—boat was perhaps Hitler's most dangerous weapon. The Ultra system was also well adapted to the provision of false intelligence to the Axis and was highly successful, for instance, in persuading the Germans that the Allied D—Day landings in Normandy were no more than a feint.

Codebreaking enabled America to kill Japan's ablest admiral, Yamamoto, during his tour of the Solomon Island defenses on April 13, 1943. His flying schedule had been put on air, the Japanese communications office claiming, `The code only went into effect on April 1 and cannot be broken.' In fact the Americans had done so by dawn on April 2. The shooting down of Yamamoto's plane was personally approved by FDR as a legitimate act of war. After it was accomplished, a signal was sent to the theater commander, Admiral William ('Bull') Halsey (1882—1959), who commanded the South Pacific Fleet in the Solomons Campaign. It read: `Pop goes the weasel.' He exclaimed: `What's so good about it? I'd hoped to lead that scoundrel up Pennsylvania Avenue in chains.'

A combination of Allied brainpower and America's matchless ability to concentrate and accelerate entrepreneurial effort was also responsible for the success of the nuclear weapons program. The notion of a man—made explosion of colossal power was implicit in Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity and the splitting of the atom in 1932 brought it within the range of practicality. Over a hundred important scientific papers on nuclear physics appeared in 1939 alone and the most significant of them, by the Dane Nils Bohr and his American pupil J. A. Wheeler, explaining the fission process, appeared only two days before the war began. Next month, at the request of Albert Einstein, who feared that Hitler would get there first and create what he called an 'anti—semitic bomb,' FDR set up a Uranium Committee. This awarded government grants to leading universities for atomic research, the first time federal money had been used for scientific work.

The pace quickened in the autumn of 1940 when two leaders of the British scientific war effort, Sir Henry Tizard and Sir John Cockcroft, went to Washington taking with them a `black box' containing, among other things, all the secrets of the British atomic program. At that time Britain was several months ahead of any other nation in the race for an A—bomb, and moving faster. Plans for a separation plant were completed in December 1940 and by March 1941 the atomic bomb had ceased to be a matter of scientific speculation and was moving into the zone of industrial technology and engineering. By July 1941 the British believed that a bomb could be made and in operation by 1943, and would prove cheaper, in terms of yield, than conventional high explosives. In fact the British were over—optimistic. The industrial and engineering problems involved in producing pure U—235, or U—238 plutonium (the alternative fissionable material), in sufficient quantities proved daunting, as did the design of the bomb itself. The success of the project was made possible only by placing behind the British project all the power of American industrial technology, resources, and entrepreneurial adventurism. In June 1941, FDR's administration created the Office of Scientific Research and Development (OSRD) under Dr Vannevar Bush, former dean of engineering at the MIT. This expanded to include teams working at Columbia, Princeton, the University of California, and Chicago University.

By spring 1942 the mechanics of the uranium chain reaction had been worked out and Dr Ernest Lawrence in California made a breakthrough in the production of plutonium. By June 1942 Bush was able to report to FDR that the bomb was feasible, though the demands in scientific manpower, engineering, money, and other resources would be immense. FDR (like Churchill before him) felt that the risk of the Nazis getting a bomb first was so real that he had no alternative but to accord top priority to its manufacture. Accordingly, the Manhattan District within the Army Corps of Engineers was established to coordinate resources and production, and the scheme was henceforth named the Manhattan Project. The first actual chain—reaction was produced by Dr Arthur Compton's team in Chicago in December 1942. A new laboratory for the purpose of building the bomb was established early in 1942 at Los Alamos, New Mexico, under the direction of Dr J. Robert Oppenheimer, the director of Princeton's Institute for Advanced Studies. Insofar as any one man `invented' the A—bomb, it was Oppenheimer, though General Leslie R. Groves was almost equally important in supervising Manhattan, establishing vast new plants in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and Hanford, Washington State, to produce the new materials required. This enormous project, working on the frontiers of technology in half a dozen directions, employed 125,000 people, cost nearly $2 billion, and was a classic exercise in the way high—technology capitalism, as originally envisaged by Thomas Edison, and modified by the experience of the New Deal, could serve the purpose of the state. The first test explosion took place on July 16, 1945 and the bomb was ready for delivery the next month. Only the American system could have produced it within such a time—scale.

Indeed, it could be said that the A—bomb was the most characteristic single product of American entrepreneurial energy. This is not said ironically: the bomb was a `democratic' bomb, and was spurred on by genuine idealism of a peculiarly American kind. Many of those involved in Manhattan felt that liberty and decency, the right of self—government, independence, and the international rule of law were at stake, and would be imperiled if Hitler got the bomb first. In this sense, the nuclear weapons program of the US was very much part of the immigrant input into American society. Oppenheimer was of Jewishimmigrant origins and believed the future of the Jewish race was involved in the project: that was why he built the first A—bomb. It was equally true that Dr Edward Teller, of immigrant Hungarian origin, who built the first H—bomb, was convinced that by doing so he was protecting American freedom from the Stalinist totalitarian system which had engulfed the country of his forebears. Fear, altruism, the desire to `make the world safe for democracy,' as much as capitalist method, drove forward the effort. Nuclear weapons were thus the product of American morality as well as of its productive skill.

World War Two was won not just by industrial muscle power and scientific brainpower. The American system may have been near—pacifist in the interwar years, and isolationist in the 1930s, but it contrived to produce a generation of outstanding commanders, most of them born within a few years of each other, who not only organized victory in the field, in the air, and on the oceans, but also helped to establish American internationalism, and concern for the wellbeing of the entire globe, once and for all—a fact demonstrated as much in their postwar civil activities as in their wartime careers. The most important of them by far was General George C. Marshall (1880—1959), who had been Chief of Operations in General Pershing's First Army in World War One, and was later in charge of instruction at the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia. Named Chief of Staff of the Army in 1938, Marshall held this appointment for over six years and was, as Churchill put it, `the true organizer of victory.' It was Marshall (as well as Churchill) who persuaded FDR that Nazi Germany was America's most dangerous enemy, and that the air

war, and later the land war, in Europe and its approaches in North Africa and the Mediterranean, must have priority over the naval war in the Pacific against Japan. This proved the right decision. It involved the preparation and unleashing of an overwhelmingly powerful invasion of German—occupied Europe, at the earliest possible date consistent with its success.

For this enormous enterprise, `Operation Overlord,' involving all services and forces from many nations, Marshall picked General Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890—1969). He was raised in Kansas, educated at West Point, a World War One captain and later assistant to General MacArthur in the Philippines, 1936—9. It is significant of the shape history was taking by the 1940s, and of the scale of military operations, that neither Marshall or Eisenhower ever commanded armies in battle. Both were strategists, organizers, trainers, coordinators. It was Marshall's gift, very necessary in a man who spent the key years of his military career working with politicians, to make an absolute and clear distinction between the political process of decision—making, and the military execution of policy, and to stick to it. This won him the respect not just of FDR himself, but of Churchill and many other Allied leaders. He instilled in Eisenhower, who had overall command of the invasions of North Africa and Italy, 1942—3, before directing Overlord in 1944, a similar awareness of his function, so that 'Ike,' as he became known to all, was able to exercise his undoubted diplomatic and political skills entirely in the immense effort of coordination needed to keep a multinational armed force functioning smoothly.

It is the function of the historian not only to describe what happened, but also to draw attention to what did not happen. World War Two was marked not by the bitter and destructive rows between politicians and generals which had been such a feature of World War One, especially on the Allied side, but by a general congruity of views. That was due in great part to the characters of these two self—disciplined and orderly men. Their view that war was a business, to be organized, as much as a series of battles, to be fought, did not prevent them picking individual commanders of outstanding battlefield enterprise and energy. General George S. Patton (1885—1945), who, under Eisenhower, commanded the US 2nd Corps in North Africa, the 7th Army in Italy, and then the 3rd Army's spectacular sweep through Brittany and Northern France and across the Rhine in 1944—5 (before being killed in an auto—accident several months after the end of the war) was perhaps the most successful field commander—and certainly the best tank general—on either side during the six—year conflict.

The counterpart of Marshall in the naval war was Admiral Ernest Joseph King (1878—1956), Commander—in—Chief of the fleet when the war opened, then Chief of Naval Operations, 1942—5. King had served as a midshipman in the successful operations against Spain in 1898 and was a staff officer in the Atlantic battle of World War One. From submarines he went on to command the carrier *Lexington* and he was responsible for the vast expansion of navy aviation, as chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics, 1933—6. It was as a carrier man that he went to the top in 1941—2 and it was King's decision to fight a carrier war in the Pacific. Some historians would rate him the greatest naval commander of the 20th century, though his gifts lay in his grasp of global strategy and logistics rather than as a fleet commander. For his Pacific Commander, King picked the Texan Chester Nimitz (1885—1966), though he insisted on conferring with him directly every fortnight and choosing his senior staff. Nimitz, under King's close supervision, himself ran a trio of able commanders, the aggressive `Bull' Halsey, the highly conservative Admiral Raymond Spruance, and the Marine Corps General Holland M. Smith, known to all as 'Howlin' Mad.'

Nimitz began the offensive war in the Pacific on August 7, 1942, when he landed US Marines on Guadalcanal, and after five months of ferocious combat the Japanese were forced to evacuate. Then followed a strategy of leapfrogging from island to island, drawing closer and closer to Japan. Though the Pacific War against Japan did not have the overall priority of the European theater, progress was steady. By February 4, 1944, Nimitz's forces had reached the western limits of the Marianas. On June 15 two Marine divisions and the 27th Army Division were landed on the key island of the chain, Saipan. The Japanese fleet was ordered to destroy the protective cover, Admiral Spruance's Task Force 58, but in a decisive naval air battle the Japanese lost 346 planes to Spruance's loss of 50, and the blow to Japanese naval airpower was fatal. This combat was the direct precursor of the Battle of Leyte Gulf, October 25, 1944, the most extensive sea engagement in history, which destroyed virtually all that remained of Japan's strategic naval power.

The naval victories in the central Pacific were paralleled by the second campaign of combined operations under Douglas MacArthur (1880—1964). His gallant rearguard action in the Philippines in 1941—2 had impressed FDR, who gave him the Medal of Honor, ordered him to Australia, and then appointed him Supreme Commander of the Southwest Pacific theater. MacArthur took the hard land—sea route to Japan via New Guinea and the Philippines, which he had sworn to return to, and his success entitled him to the distinction of accepting the surrender of Japan, September 2, 1945, on USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. Thereafter he was given the simple mandate of governing Japan and creating democracy and the rule of law there, a task which he carried out with august proconsular relish and remarkable success.

In Europe, where the D—Day landings of Operation Overlord, June 6, 1944, began an eleven—month continental campaign which ended with the suicide of Hitler and the Nazi surrender in May 1945, the political aspects were far more complicated. Eisenhower himself refused to allow political considerations—that is, the future composition and ideological complexion of Europe after the fall of Hitler—to enter his strategy at any point. Hence he refused to countenance the proposal of his chief British subordinate, General Bernard Montgomery, to throw all the Allied resources into a single, direct thrust at Berlin, which might have ended the war in 1944, but embodied corresponding risks, and instead favored his own `broad front' policy, of advancing over a wide axis, which was much safer, but also much slower. As a result the Russians got to Berlin first, in the process occupying most of eastern Europe and half of Germany itself. While Russian strategy in the rollback of German forces, 1943—5, was largely determined by Stalin's aim of controlling the maximum amount of territory and natural resources in the postwar period, Eisenhower stuck closely to his military mandate of destroying the Nazi forces and compelling Germany to surrender unconditionally. He resisted any temptation to jockey for postwar advantage. He halted when he felt his task was accomplished.

To some extent Eisenhower, in ignoring the politics of the postwar, reflected the views of his political master, President Roosevelt. FDR, a superb political tactician and a master of public relations, excellent at galvanizing the American people to great purposes, was unclear in his own mind about what those great purposes should be, beyond the obvious one of winning the war. In this respect he lacked Churchill's clarity and vision. FDR was very cosmopolitan at a superficial level: by the age of fourteen he had made eight transatlantic crossings, and he had had varied international experiences during and immediately after World War One. But, while often subtle and shrewd about American domestic politics, he was extremely naive, and sometimes woefully ignorant, about global political strategy. In particular, he tended, like many intellectuals and

pseudo—intellectuals of his time, to take the Soviet Union at its face value—a peace—loving `People's Democracy,' with an earnest desire to better the conditions of the working peoples of the world. He was very badly advised by the businessman and campaign—contributor he sent to Moscow, Joseph E. Davies, who was even more naive than FDR, and whose reports make curious reading. Davies saw Stalin as a benevolent democrat who `insisted on the liberalization of the constitution' and was `projecting actual secret and universal suffrage.' The ambassador found this monster, whose crimes were pretty well known at the time, and whom we now realize was responsible for the deaths of 30 million of his own people, to be `exceedingly wise and gentle ... A child would like to sit on his lap and a dog would sidle up to him.' Davies told his government that Stalin's notorious show—trials were absolutely genuine and repeated his views in a mendacious book, *Mission to Moscow*, published in 1941. Sometimes FDR believed Davies, sometimes he didn't, but he trusted the *New York Times*, whose reporting from Moscow, by Harold Denny and Walter Duranty, was spectacularly misleading and, in Duranty's case, grotesquely Stalinist. Duranty's favorite saying was `I put my money on Stalin.'

FDR's unsuspicious approach to dealing with Stalin and the Soviet Union was reinforced by his rooted belief that anti—Communists were paranoid and dangerous people, reactionaries of the worst sort. In this category he included many of his State Department advisors and Churchill himself. FDR particularly distrusted Davies' successor in Moscow, Laurence Steinhard, who took the hardline State Department view of Russia's good intention and strongly urged his government that to appease the Soviets would be fatal to America's policy aims. `My experience,' he reported, is that the Soviet leaders `respond only to force, and if force cannot be applied, to straight oriental bartering.' FDR's reaction was to ignore him. Indeed, he went further. The moment Hitler's declaration of war made Russia America's ally, he devised procedures for bypassing the State Department and the American embassy in Moscow and dealing with Stalin directly. Nothing could have been more foolish, as well as catastrophic for the people America was pledged to protect. FDR's intermediary was Harry Hopkins (1890—1946), a former social worker and political fixer whom FDR trusted more than anyone else, insofar as he trusted anybody.

Hopkins reported back that Stalin (naturally) was delighted with the idea: `[he] has no confidence in our ambassador or in any of our officials.' FDR also wanted to bypass Churchill, whom he thought an incorrigible old imperialist, incapable of understanding ideological idealism. He wrote to Churchill, March 18, 1942, `I know you will not mind my being brutally frank when I tell you that I think that I can personally handle Stalin better than either your Foreign Office or my State Department. Stalin hates the guts of all your top people. He thinks he likes me better, and I hope he will continue to do so.' `I think,' FDR said of Stalin, `that if I give him everything I possibly can and ask nothing from him in return, *noblesse oblige*, he won't try to annex anything and will work with me for a world of democracy and peace.' But what FDR, over Churchill's protests, gave to Stalin was not his to give.

Thus it was that, at Roosevelt's insistence, Soviet Russia emerged from World War Two as its sole beneficiary by precisely one of those secret wartime treaties which Woodrow Wilson and the Treaty of Versailles had so roundly condemned. And not only Wilson—Roosevelt himself. The Atlantic Charter of August 14, 1941, which Roosevelt largely drafted—reiterated in the United Nations Declaration of January 1, 1942—stated that the signatories `seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other ... they desire to seek no territorial changes which do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned.' Yet at the Yalta Conference of February 1945, at which Roosevelt acted in effect as chairman and intermediary between the

Communist dictator Stalin and the `hopelessly reactionary' Churchill, Stalin made a series of precisely such demands. In return for agreeing to enter the war against Japan `two or three months after Germany has surrendered,' Stalin demanded recognition of Russia's possession of Outer Mongolia, southern Sakhalin, and adjacent islands, outright annexation of the Kuril Islands plus other territorial rights and privileges in the Far East, at the expense of Japan and China and without any reference to the wishes of local inhabitants. FDR agreed to these acquisitive conditions virtually without argument, and Churchill, who was desperate for FDR's support on issues nearer home, acquiesced, since the Far East was `largely an American affair ... To us the problem was remote and secondary.'

Even in Europe, however, Roosevelt tended to give Stalin what he wished, thus making possible the immense satellite empire of Communist totalitarian states in eastern Europe which endured until the end of the 1980s. This became apparent as early as the Tehran Conference in November 1943, attended by Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill. The chairman of the British Chiefs of Staff, Sir Alan Brooke, summed it up: `Stalin has got the President in his pocket.' In the period immediately before the decisive Yalta meeting, Churchill was able to save Greece from Soviet domination, and thus bar Stalin's access to the Mediterranean, but only at the cost of sacrificing the rest of the Balkans. He was disturbed by the anxiety of Eisenhower and other American commanders to curtail US military operations in Europe as quickly as possible, once Germany was defeated, so that troops could be transferred to the Far East. Eisenhower thought it wrong to use American armies even as a deterrent to Soviet ambitions in eastern Europe: `I would be loath to hazard American lives for purely political purposes,' as he put it. At Yalta itself, FDR deliberately rejected Churchill's suggestion that the American and British governments should coordinate their tactics in advance. `He did not wish,' as Averell Harriman put it, `to feed Soviet suspicions that the British and Americans would be operating in concert.' When the fate of Poland came to be decided, FDR refused to back the British demand for an international team to supervise the elections which Stalin promised, being content with the Russian assurance that `all democratic and antiNazi parties shall have the right to take part.' He added a typical piece of Rooseveltian rhetoric called `The Declaration on Liberated Europe,' which verbally committed all its signatories to respect `the right of all people to choose the form of government under which they will live.' Stalin was happy to sign it, and was delighted to hear from FDR that all American forces would be out of Europe within two years.

It is difficult to surmise what would have happened in Europe if Roosevelt had survived to the end of his fourth term and had continued to direct American policy in the early postwar period. There is some evidence that in the last weeks of his life, in spring 1945, he was becoming increasingly disillusioned about Russian behavior and was beginning to realize that Stalin had betrayed his trust. His views on other issues too were becoming more volatile. A case in point was what to do about the Jewish survivors of Hitler's Holocaust. It was during World War Two that the American Jewish community first developed its collective self—confidence, and began to exert the political muscle its numbers, wealth, and ability had created. David Ben—Gurion, one of the founders of the state of Israel, visited the United States in 1941 and felt what he called `the pulse of her great Jewry with its five millions.' In the closing stages of the war, and the immediate postwar, it became the best—organized and most influential lobby in America. It was able to convince political leaders that it held the voting key to swing states like New York, Illinois, and Pennsylvania.

FDR was as conscious as any other professional politician of the voting strength of American Jews. He had not been prepared to ask Congress to open America to an emergency influx of Jewish refugees before or during the war. Nor, as America's commander—in—chief, had he been willing to agree to divert Allied resources to physical attempts to prevent the Holocaust, when news of its magnitude and horror trickled through. On the contrary; he was instrumental in persuading the American Jewish leaders that it was in everyone's interests to concentrate on defeating the Nazi forces and winning the war as quickly as possible. FDR had a general commitment to support Jewish efforts to create a national home in Palestine. However, he sounded a distinctly anti—Zionist note when, on his way back to America from Yalta, he had a brief meeting with the King of Saudi Arabia, and they discussed the foundation of the Jewish state. `I learned more about the whole problem,' he told Congress on his return, `... by talking with Ibn Saud for five minutes than I could have learned in an exchange of two or three dozen letters." David Niles, the passionately pro—Zionist presidential assistant, testified: `There are serious doubts in my mind that Israel would have come into being if Roosevelt had lived.' But Roosevelt did not live; he died, quite suddenly, of a massive cerebral hemorrhage on April 12, 1945. The United States immediately came under leadership of a quite different kind.

Harry S. Truman—the `S' stood not for nothing, as his enemies jeered, but for both Solomon and Shippe—proved to be one of the great American presidents, and in some respects the most typical. He was seen at the time of his sudden precipitation into the White House as a nonentity, a machine—man, a wholly parochial and domestic politician from a backward border state who would be lost in the world of international statesmanship in which he now become the leading player. In fact Truman acquitted himself well, almost from the start, and not only the United States but the whole world had reason to be grateful for his simple, old—fashioned sense of justice, the clear distinctions he drew between right and wrong, and the decisiveness with which he applied them to the immense global problems which confronted him from the very first moments of his presidency. Moreover, any careful study of his record shows that he was well prepared, by character, temperament, and experience, for the immense position he now occupied.

Truman's Missouri, admitted as the twenty—fourth state in 1821 as part of the famous Missouri Compromise, remained slave—holding but was never part of the cotton economy of the South. In economic terms it developed as a prairie state with links to the West, and in 1860—1 its Unionists kept it officially loyal to the federal government. All the same, it was the scene of guerrilla fighting throughout the Civil War and thereafter remained thoroughly Democratic in the Southern sense, violent, lawless in many ways, corrupt, and machine—ridden. In the 1920s and 1930s, when Truman made his mark, power in the state was divided between St Louis, comparatively honest thanks mainly to a then—outstanding newspaper, the *St Louis Post—Dispatch*, and Jackson County, which included Kansas City. In the interwar years, Kansas City usually had the upper hand. Since it was entirely controlled by the Democratic Party machine run by T. J. Pendergast, and since Truman came from Jackson County, the future President, if he wanted to go into politics at all, had no alternative but to work for the machine, and be branded for doing so. When he finally reached the Senate in 1935, he was referred to as `Tom Pendergast's Office Boy,' not least by the *Post—Dispatch*, which long remained his mortal enemy.

But the reality was different. Truman's political career in Missouri demonstrates how he emerged from a corrupt local system but remained honest and his own man. The point was and is important because it helps to show why Truman, not despite his background but because of it, had the character and skills to save the West when the death of Roosevelt gave him the

opportunity. Truman came from a family of Baptist farmers, who owned or leased substantial acreages but never seemed to make much money. Jackson County was only semi—tamed in his early days. The old outlaw Frank James still lived there; the veterans of Quantrill's Raiders, the most notorious of Missouri's Confederate guerrillas, held annual reunions in this district; and one of Truman's uncles, Jim `Crow' Chiles, had been killed in a gunfight with Marshal Jim Peacock in Kansas City's Courthouse Square. Truman's mother Martha `handled a shotgun as well as most men' and was `as tough as a barrel of roofing nails.' Despite all this, Truman in many ways had the kind of childhood presented in Norman Rockwell's covers. His family moral training was strict, reinforced by the public schools of his home town, Independence. In some ways his schooling was primitive but its emphasis on character—building was of a kind which American parents, at the end of the 20th century, find it impossible to obtain for their children, however much they pay for it. Family and school combined to give him a religious and moral upbringing which left him with a lifelong conviction that personal behavior, and the behavior of nation, should alike be guided by clear principles which made absolute distinctions between right and wrong. These principles were based on fundamental Judeo—Christian documents, the Old and the New Testaments, and especially the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount.

In short, Truman was a product of Victorian values, and he also accepted the Victorian conviction that the story of mankind was one of upward progress through industry and high ideals. Truman was brought up to believe that, ever since its inception, America had occupied the moral high ground in the community of nations. Thus formed, he felt this distinction was slipping away from his country as early as the 1930s, confiding in his diary just before he entered the Senate: `Some day we'll awake, have a reformation of the heart, teach our kids honor and kill a few sex psychologists, put boys in high schools with *men* teachers (not cissies), close all the girls' finishing schools, shoot all the efficiency experts and become a nation of God's people once more.'

Truman was thus imbued with a strong determination to get on in life and to do so honestly in conformity with the good old American tradition. But it did not prove easy. He turned sixteen in the year 1900 and for the next twenty years he engaged, sometimes in conjunction with members of his family, in a variety of farming, business, and mining ventures, always working hard, never making much money, often losing it, and sometimes barely avoiding ruin. When he became a successful politician he was categorized as a former haberdasher, but the truth is he was jack—of—all—trades and a master of none. Patient research has unraveled the history and finances of all Truman's multifarious attempts to get on, but all they seem to prove is that Truman was not born to be a businessman.

It was World War One that made him. It showed he could, and given the chance would, lead from the front—and in the right direction. He enlisted as soon as possible in a spirit of old—style patriotism. Despite poor eyesight, he was commissioned, served in France as a battery commander in the 129th Field Artillery, led his men with conspicuous courage and skill, and was discharged from active service as a major. He loved his gunners, and they loved him. He remained a reserve officer throughout the interwar years, regularly going into camp and on maneuvers, being promoted to full colonel, and finally resigning only in 1945, when he became US president and commander—in—chief. This connection with the US Army was vital to his future performance as president because it led him to take a continuing interest in global strategy, in America's preparedness for war, and in foreign politics. Truman was the very reverse of an isolationist, seeing America as assigned by God and its own circumstances and good fortune, to

play a leading role in the world. There can have been few Americans of his generation who took a keener interest in events on the other side of the Atlantic and Pacific.

Truman's thirty years with the US Army was also part of his instinctive Americanism—his desire to join in, to participate in, every aspect of life in his community. In addition to his army reserve service, which involved countless dinners and outings, he joined and rose steadily in the Masonic order, was active in the American Legion, and was a prominent member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. He Joined the Kansas City Club, the Lakewood Country Club, the Triangle Club of young businessmen, and the National Old Trails Association. Any organization he became a member of had the free use of his services, though he sometimes had to resign because he could not afford the dues.

With his war record and his love of community effort, it was inevitable he would go into local politics, care of the Pendergast machine. Having attended Kansas City Law School, he was elected judge of the Jackson County Court in 1922 and from 1926 was its presiding judge. There he discovered his second great gift, for administration. For the court was primarily not a juridical body but a governing one, distantly derived from the old Quarter Sessions, which ran local government in England until the late 19th century. The main function of the court in Truman's day was maintaining and updating the transport system of Kansas City and its environs during a revolutionary period when the whole of America, not least the Midwest, was becoming motorized, and when the building of modern roads was paramount. To carry through a major road—building program as the nominee of the Pendergast machine, whose paymasters specialized in building contracts, was a challenge to any man's honesty. Truman was under no illusions about his political associates. It was his habit, throughout his life, to keep private notes or diaries in which he let off steam and wrote away his frustrations. Apart from Pendergast himself, whom Truman insisted was, despite his faults, `a real man' who `kept his word,' albeit `he gives it very seldom and usually on a sure thing,' all the other machine men were worthless. Robert Barr was `a dud, a weakling, no ideals, no nothin';' Thomas B. Bash led Truman to ask: `I wonder what the B stands for—Bull or Baloney?' Leo Koehler's `ethics were acquired in the north—end precinct ... he can't be stopped.' Spencer Salisbury `used me for his own ends, robbed me;' Fred Wallace was `my drunken brother—in—law;' Cas Welch was `a thug and a crook of the worst water;' Joe Shannon `hasn't got an honest appointee on the payroll;' Mike Ross was `just a plain thief;' as for Willie Ross, who had recently died, `I suspect his sales of rotten paving have bankrupted the government of Hell by now.

The background to Truman's road administration was not just corruption but gangland violence. From 1928, the Pendergast machine was enmeshed with the minions of the Kansas City underworld boss John Lazia. He was a poor immigrant boy who had `made good,' after a fashion, as a gangster—turned—businessman and community godfather—an archetype of the era. He owed his position to a small army of enforcers, which included the notorious Charles `Pretty Boy' Floyd. They used Kansas City as a sanctuary when things got tough in the more law—abiding world to the north and east. Al Capone himself recognized Lazia as king in Kansas City. Indeed next to Chicago itself, Kansas City in the 1930s was the nation's crime center, specializing in arson, bombing, kidnapping, murder in the street, and official toleration of gambling, prostitution, the illicit sale of liquor, and extortion.

To get his road program through, Truman had to avoid being engulfed by the outrageous rake—off demands of the Pendergast machine—Pendergast himself was a compulsive gambler, which explains his incessant and growing need for cash—and to defy the strong—arm methods of Lazia. So he had to operate the legitimate aspects of machine politics for all they were worth.

As late as 1941, when he was one of the most important men in the country, he was still worrying about the nomination of a dentist for the Jackson County farm, the selection of a shop—foreman for the County garage, and the appointment of road overseers. He undoubtedly felt the strain of working with corrupt men on a day—to—day basis while trying to keep them way from his roads program. Obviously in some cases he was forced to yield simply to get things done. He wrote in one agonizing memo to himself: `Am I a fool or an ethical giant? I don't know ... Am I just a crook to compromise just in order to get the job done? You judge it, I can't.'

The most meticulous research has not uncovered any examples of Truman himself profiting from all the easy opportunities open to him. The closest he came to corruption was in 1938 when, to avoid yet another crisis on the family farm, Truman arranged a nine—month loan of $35,000 from the Jackson County School Fund, on a property that was assessed at only $22,680. Pointing this out, the Kansas City Star commented that a loan of this size was strictly unlawful, and it later became overdue. But the best proof of Truman's honesty is that he remained poor. Throughout the 1930s he was struggling desperately to pay off the miserable debts of his haberdashery business—and this at a time when he was responsible for spending scores of millions of dollars.

In the end, Truman completed his new highway system on time, within budget, and to the highest quality standards. It was a moral as well as an administrative achievement, which took farmers out of their isolation and increased the value of farmland by an average of $50 an acre, while making the rural beauty of the region accessible to city dwellers. It was built with a speed which would be unimaginable today. Truman saw it as a triumph of 'planning'—the 1930s vogue word—and celebrated its completion with a little book, *Results of County Planning*. His administrative career was thus built up despite and in some respects against the Pendergast machine. Hence, though he may have been elected senator for Missouri in 1934 as its nominee, he was also an independent figure who could justify himself without the help of Tom Pendergast or anyone else.

His character and skill were put to the test when the justice Department made Kansas City in general, and Pendergast in particular, its Number One target for 1938. The following year Pendergast was fined $350,000—his entire remaining net assets—and was lucky to get only fifteen months in Leavenworth. All his chief associates were convicted. Truman was able to write to his wife Bess: `Looks like everyone got rich in Jackson County but me. I'm glad I can still sleep well even if it is a hardship on you and Margie [his daughter Margaret] for me to be so damn poor. Mr Murray, Mr McElroy, Mr Higgins and even Mr P himself probably would pay all the ill—gotten loot they took for my position and clear conscience.'

At the time most observers believed Truman was sure to be convicted too or, if not, wiped out in the 1940 election. The collapse of the Pendergast machine left him exposed to a multitude of enemies. The *St Louis Post—Dispatch* crowed: `He is a dead cock in the pit.' But the worst that happened is that the county foreclosed on the family farm, and that in turn underlined his own poverty and suggested to most people that Truman was honest. He was already an experienced and effective election campaigner. He now set about building up his own machine and conducted the first of his great barnstorming campaigns. In the Democratic primary—the key election—he actually carried the `enemy' city of St Louis by 8,391, and won forty—four counties out of seventy—five, five more than he had six years earlier with the Pendergast machine behind him. It was a personal triumph which once and for all established Truman as his own man.

Thereafter Truman became, increasingly, a national figure. During his first term he had stuck to transport, in effect carrying trough a fundamental reorganization of the way in which the US

railroad system was regulated. In his second term, with the advent of war and the largest spending program in American history, he created and presided over the Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program. Here his experience in carrying through a large—scale and efficient road—building program in the teeth of a corrupt machine was invaluable in insuring that the United States, while arming with all deliberate speed, avoided waste, fraud, and abuse by both Big Business and Big Labor. What became known as the Truman Committee, according to the boast of its chairman, succeeded in saving the country $15 billion, a colossal sum in those days. Whatever the exact figure, the savings were plainly huge and much appreciated. In 1943 Truman's efforts got him on the cover of *Time* magazine as `a crusader for an effective war effort.' The magazine even turned Truman's Pendergast connection to his advantage since it said he had remained personally uncorrupt in a machine—ridden state but had refused to kick an old political friend just because he was down. The next year a Look survey of fifty—two Washington newsmen named Truman as one of the most valuable officials in the nation—and the only one in Congress. Thus the stage was set for Truman's selection as FDR's running mate in 1944, and his accession to the White House less than three months Roosevelt began his fourth term.

This survey of Truman's previous career has been necessary because it shows he did not simply emerge from nowhere to became an effective president by a kind of natural miracle. He was in every way a product of the American democratic system, just as Lincoln was. His career, character, and experience prepared him to take over control of the greatest power on earth in the concluding stages of a world war and the beginning of a confused and dangerous peace. As a successful administrator, he had been used to making rapid decisions in quick succession. As a former field officer and active reservist he had followed closely the dangers that beset the democratic powers and America's ability to meet them. By presiding over the most important wartime Congressional committee he had acquired an enormous knowledge of the military effort, its cost, efficiency, and outreach. He probably knew more about the nuts and bolts of defense than Roosevelt himself.

Truman was taking decisions of importance from his earliest moments in the White House, but his first act of historic significance was authorizing the use of the new A—bomb against Japan. The promptness and singlemindedness with which he took this step illustrates, in one sense, aptness for his supreme executive role. But, in another, it demonstrates the way in which total war corrupts even the right—thinking, and imposes a relativistic morality which distorts the judgment even of those, like Truman, who are committed to a set of absolute values. In the 1930s the democracies had looked upon the bombing of cities with horror, and there was outrage when Hitler's Germany began the war by indiscriminate bombing raids on Warsaw and other Polish cities, followed in due course by similar attacks on Rotterdam, Belgrade, and many British cities. Churchill, who was well aware of the moral decay war brings, initiated the strategy of the mass bombing of German cities on July 2, 1940 not so much by way of reprisal as because he was overwhelmed by the prospect of Nazi occupation—to him the ultimate moral catastrophe—and saw bombing as the only offensive weapon then available to the British. When the Americans entered the war, with their capacity to build vast numbers of heavy bombers, they fitted naturally into this strategy, and one of the earliest US wartime exploits was the raids on Tokyo and other Japanese cities carried out by B25 bombers, under the command of General James Doolittle on April 8, 1941. The US Army Air Corps' bombers operated in conjunction with the British Royal Air Force in carrying out continual raids, often of a thousand bombers or more each, on German

targets, both `area raids' on cities designed to destroy German civilian morale and pinpoint attacks on military and economic targets, during the years 1942—5.

These horrifying raids culminated in the destruction of Dresden on the night of February 13—14, 1945, a blow agreed upon at Yalta by FDR and Churchill to please Stalin, which was carried out by two waves of British bombers followed by a third, American one. Among other bombs, over 650,000 incendiaries were dropped, the firestorm engulfing 8 square miles, totally destroying 4,200 acres and killing 25,000 men, women, and children. As it was the night of Shrove Tuesday, many of the dead children were still in carnival costumes. Hitler's propaganda chief, Josef Goebbels, claimed: `It is the work of lunatics.' It was not: it was the response of outraged democracies corrupted by the war he and his Nazi colleagues had started, and now obsessed with what one British military theorist called the `Jupiter Complex'—the ability granted by the possession of huge air forces, to rain thunderbolts on the wicked. The Jupiter complex was to be with the United States for the rest of the century.

What American bombers could do to Nazi Germany operating from bases in Britain, they began to do to Japan, as soon as it could be brought within their range. This was the object of America's Central Pacific strategy, which began at Tarawa Atoll in November 1943. It consisted of hopping or leapfrogging the islands on the route to Tokyo, using airpower, amphibious landings, and overwhelming firepower. At Tarawa, the desperate resistance of the Japanese army meant the Americans had to kill all but seventeen of the 5,000—strong garrison, and lost 1,000 men themselves. As a result they increased the firepower and lengthened the leapfrogging. At the next island, Kwajalein, the air—sea bombardment was so cataclysmic that an eyewitness said, `the entire island looked as if it had been picked up to 20,000 feet and then dropped.' Virtually all the 8,500 defenders were killed, but the use of this colossal firepower kept American dead down to 373. These ratios were maintained. In taking Leyte, the Japanese lost all but 5,000 of their 70,000 men, the Americans only 3,500. At Iwo Jima, the Americans sustained their worst casualty ratio, 4,917 dead to over 18,000 Japanese, and in taking Okinawa they had their highest casualty bill of all, 12,520 dead or missing, against Japanese losses of 185,000 killed. Most Japanese were killed by air or sea bombardment, or were cut off and starved. They never set eyes on an American footsoldier or got within bayonet range of him. Thus Americans came to see overwhelming firepower, often delivered from great distances, as the key both to defeating the Japanese and to keeping their own casualties as low as possible.

The area bombing of Japan, by land—based heavy bombers maintaining a round—the—clock bombardment on an ever—growing scale, was driven by the same understandable motive—to end the war as swiftly as possible with the minimum American casualties. Those who controlled Japan, insofar as anyone really controlled it, knew the war was lost by the autumn of 1942 at the latest, and their culpability in declining to negotiate is obvious and, to Western minds, totally inexplicable. To the American politicians and military leaders in charge of the war against Japan, therefore, it was Japan which bore the moral responsibility for what followed. It started in November 1944, when the captured Guam base came into full use, and B29 Flying Fortresses, each carrying 8 tons of bombs, could attack in 1,000—strong masses with fighter—escorts. It is worth recalling that, as recently as September 1939, FDR had sent messages to all the belligerents begging them to refrain from the `inhuman barbarities' of bombing civilians. But that was pre—Pearl Harbor, in the distant moral past. From March to July 1945, against virtually no resistance, the B29s dropped 100,000 tons of incendiaries on sixty—six Japanese towns and cities, wiping out 170,000 square miles of closely populated streets. On the night of March 9—10, 1945, for instance, 300 B29s, helped by a strong north wind, turned the old swamp—plain of

Musashi, on which Tokyo is built, into an inferno, destroying 15 square miles of the city, killing 83,000 and injuring 102,000. An eyewitness in the nearby prisoner—of—war camp compared it in horror to the cataclysmic 19z3 earthquake, which he had also witnessed.' Even before the dropping of the A—bombs, Japanese figures show that bombing raids on sixty—nine areas had destroyed 2,250,000 buildings, made 9 million homeless, killed 260,000, and injured 410,000. These raids increased steadily in number and power, and in July 1945 the Allied fleets closed in, using their heavy guns to bombard coastal cities.

It is important to bear the scale of this `conventional' assault on Japan's cities and population in mind when considering the decision to use nuclear weapons. FDR and Churchill devoted vast resources to the Manhattan Project not only to be first in getting nuclear weapons but in order to use them to shorten the war. As General Groves put it, `The Upper Crust want it as soon as possible.' A protocol, signed by Churchill and Roosevelt at the latter's Hyde Park estate on September 9, 1944, stated that `when the bomb is finally available it might perhaps after mature consideration be used against the Japanese.' By the summer of 1945, this approach to the problem seemed out of date. Though no one in a position of authority in Japan by then believed victory was possible, or eventual defeat avoidable, the consensus among the rulers was that honor demanded resistance to the bitter end. This was precisely the strategy, if so it can be called, of the Japanese Supreme Council, which on June 6, 1945 approved a document, `Fundamental Policy to Be Followed Henceforth in the Conduct of the War.' Its final plan for the defense of Japan itself, `Operation Decision,' provided for the use of 10,000 suicide planes (mostly converted trainers), fifty—three infantry divisions, and twenty—five brigades: 2,350,000 trained troops would fight on the beaches, backed by 4 million army and navy civil employees and a civilian militia of 28 million. Their weapons were to include muzzle—loaders, bamboo spears, and bows and arrows. Special legislation was passed by the Diet to form this army.'

American intelligence quickly became aware of this fight—to—the—finish strategy, and American commanders were under no illusions, in the light of their experience in conquering the mid—Pacific islands, what it would mean in terms of casualties to themselves, and indeed to the Japanese. By this stage in the war, the Americans had suffered 280,677 combat deaths in Europe and 41,322 in the Pacific, plus 115,187 service deaths from non—hostile causes, and 971,801 non—fatal casualties. In addition, 10,650 US servicemen had died (it was later learned) while prisoners—of—war of the Japanese (out of a total of 25,600). The Allied commanders calculated that, if an invasion of Japan became necessary, they must expect up to a million further casualties. Japanese losses, assuming comparable ratios to those already experienced, would be in the range of 10 million to 20 million.

The continued display of ever increasing firepower, therefore, in the hope of inducing a Japanese surrender, seemed in all the circumstances the logical, rational, and indeed humanitarian solution to an intolerable dilemma produced by the irrational obstinacy of those in charge of Japan's destiny. That was the decision taken, and into it the availability of the A—bomb slotted naturally. When Oppenheimer's test plutonium bomb exploded on July 16, generating a fireball with a temperature four times that at the center of the Sun, its inventor quoted a phrase from the *Bhagavadgita*. `the radiance of a thousand suns ... I am

become as death, the destroyer of worlds.' He, at least, recognized that a great technological and moral threshold had now to be crossed, or not. But then Oppenheimer had not witnessed a firestorm created in a German or Japanese city by conventional high explosives or incendiaries dropped during a 1,000—plane Allied raid. His colleague Fermi, more prosaically, calculated that the shockwave created by the test bomb was equivalent to a blast of 10,000 tons of TNT.

The news of the successful experiment was flashed to Truman on his way back to Washington from the preliminary Allied peace talks in Potsdam. Truman promptly signed an order to bring the bomb into the offensive program against Japan and use it as soon as possible. There does not seem to have been any prolonged discussion about the wisdom or morality of using the new weapon, at the top political and military level.

Indeed, the figures show that nuclear weapons were merely a new upward notch in a steadily increasing continuum of destructive power which had been progressing throughout the war. The Allied campaign to break Japan's will before an invasion became inevitable was driven forward with relentless energy. On August 1, 820 B29s unloaded 6,600 tons of explosive on five towns in North Kyushu. Five days later, America's one, untested uranium bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan's eighth—largest city, headquarters of the 2nd General Army and an important embarkation port. Some 720,000 leaflets warning that the city would be `obliterated' had been dropped two days before. No notice was taken by the inhabitants, partly because it was rumored that Truman's mother had once lived near by, and it was thought that the city, being pretty, would be used by the Americans as an occupation center. The bomb was launched from the B29 *Enola Gay*, commanded by Colonel Paul Tibbets, and it caused an explosion equivalent to about 20,000 tons of TNT, three times the power of the August 1 raid. It killed 66,000 to 78,000 people, injured 80,000, and exposed 300,000 more to the effects of radiation.

The Japanese reaction to the Hiroshima bomb does not suggest that one such demonstration would have been enough to compel surrender. Publicly the Japanese government protested about `the disregard for international law' (which they themselves had totally ignored for twenty years). Privately, they asked Professor Nishina, head of their own atomic program, whether it was a genuine nuclear weapon and, if so, whether he could duplicate it within six months. In the absence of a decisive Japanese reaction to the Allied demand for an immediate and unconditional surrender, the second, plutonium—type bomb was dropped on August 9, not on its primary target, which the pilot could not find, but on its alternative one which, by a cruel irony, was the Christian city of Nagasaki, the nearest thing to a center of resistance to Japanese militarism. Over 74,800 people were killed by it that day. This may have persuaded the Japanese that the Americans had a large stock of such bombs. In fact only two more were ready, and scheduled for dropping on August 13 and 16. At all events, on August Io the Japanese cabled agreeing in principle to surrender without conditions. This came a few hours before the Russians, who now had 1,600,000 men on the Manchurian border, declared war on Japan, following the agreement made at Yalta. It thus seems likely that the use of the two nuclear weapons was decisive in securing the Japanese surrender. That was the unanimous Allied conviction at the time. Immediately the Japanese message was received, nuclear warfare was suspended, though conventional raids continued, 1,500 B29s bombing Tokyo from dawn till dusk on August 13. The final decision to surrender was taken the next day, the 14th. Truman never had any qualms, at the time or later, that his decision to use both A—bombs had been right, indeed unavoidable, and he believed to his dying day that dropping the bombs had saved countless lives, Allied and Japanese. Most of those who have studied the evidence agree with him.'

Using the A—bomb seemed, at least at the time, a comparatively simple decision, and Truman took it readily. What the United States ought to do in Europe was a much more complicated question. Truman inherited an appreciation of America's role in postwar Europe based on FDR's conviction of Stalin's benevolence: US forces were to defeat Germany, then go to the Pacific, or home, as quickly as possible. The UN (set up in October —1945), with America committed to

membership, was to do the rest. Truman, unlike FDR, had no illusion about Communism or the nature of the Soviet regime. From the start, he had seen both Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia as two hideous totalitarian systems, with nothing morally to choose between them. When Hitler invaded Russia in 1941, he told a reporter: `If we see that Germany is winning, we should help Russia and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and that way let them kill as many as possible, although I don't want to see Hitler victorious under any circumstances.' Writing to his wife Bess immediately after America entered the war, he told her that Stalin was `as untrustworthy as Hitler or Al Capone.' He reiterated his brutally realistic view of Russia as a war ally: `As long as the Russians keep the 192 divisions of the Germans busy in Europe that certainly is a war effort that cannot be sneezed at ... I am perfectly willing to help Russia as long as they are willing to fight Germany to a standstill.' Between this point and his assumption of the presidency, nothing changed Truman's view that the Soviet Union was essentially a gangster state, and the moment he took up office all the information flowing in strengthened this conviction.

Hence at 5.30 P.M. on April 30 he summoned Stalin's Foreign Minister, Vlacheslav Molotov, to Blair House (he had not yet moved into the White House) and told him that Russia must carry out what it had agreed at Yalta about Poland: `I gave it to him straight. I let him have it. It was the straight one—two to the jaw.' Molotov: `I have never been talked to like that in my life.' Truman: `Carry out your agreements and you won't get talked to like that.'°° But Truman could not transform American military policy in the last days of the war. General Omar Bradley calculated that it would take an additional 200,000 US casualties to press on and take Berlin. General Marshall advised that capturing Prague was not possible. General Eisenhower was opposed to any US move which might jeopardize the superficially friendly relations between his forces and the Red Army. All wanted Soviet assistance against Japan. By the time Japan had surrendered, the Communist occupation of eastern Europe and most of the Balkans was a *fait accompli*, and the whole of this vast area, including half Germany and what before the war had been nine independent countries, was lost to freedom and democracy for more than a generation.

It was unclear for some time whether western Europe could be saved either. Even at the political and diplomatic level, it took precious weeks and months to reverse the Roosevelt policy. In the first half of 1945, the State Department was still trying to prevent the publication of any material critical of Soviet Russia, even straight factual journalism, such as William White's *Report on the Russians.* At the preliminary Allied peace conference at Potsdam in July 1945, when Truman first met Stalin, he found he had at his elbow Ambassador Davies, now the proud possessor of the Order of Lenin, who urged the President: `I think Stalin's feelings are hurt. Be nice to him.' In fact, Truman's first view of Stalin was not unfavorable: he thought him a crook but, given firmness, one he could work with. `Stalin is as near like Tom Pendergast as any man I know' was his verdict. In Britain, Churchill was succeeded by the Labour government of Clement Attlee, obsessed by home problems and Britain's rapidly deteriorating financial plight, vastly increased when Congress abruptly terminated Lend—Lease on August 21, 1945. There were many who thought the game in Europe was up. Harriman, back from Moscow, told the Navy Secretary, James Forrestal, that `half and maybe all of Europe might be Communist by the end of next winter.'

And so it might have been, had not Stalin overplayed his hand, displayed insatiable greed, and so reversed the process of American withdrawal. And it was greed not only for land and power but for blood: he arrested sixteen leading non—Communist Polish politicians, accused them of `terrorism,' and set in motion the machinery for the next show—trial. It is worth examining the

beginning of the Cold War in some detail, partly because it set the pattern for American foreign and defense policy for the best part of half a century, partly because some historians have attempted to argue that the West, and particularly America, have to share responsibility with Russia for the onset of the Cold War, or even that it was primarily America's doing. But this view does not square with the evidence of Truman's papers, which show clearly that he was extremely anxious to work fairly and honestly with Stalin, not least because he was under the illusion that Stalin was easier to deal with than possible successors, like Molotov. He abandoned this view only reluctantly.

But the evidence on the ground was overwhelming that Soviet armies and agents were enforcing Soviet power or establishing puppet governments wherever they physically could. All American diplomats on the spot and intelligence sources reported in the same way. Maynard Barnes cabled details about a bloodbath of democrats in Bulgaria. Robert Patterson reported from Belgrade that any Yugoslav seen with an American or an Englishman was arrested immediately. Arthur Schoenfeld described in detail the imposition of the Communist dictatorship in Hungary. From Rome, Ellery Stone advised that a Communist *putsch* was likely in Italy. William Donovan, head of the Office of Strategic Services, then America's nearest approach to a global intelligence agency (it was being reorganized as the Central Intelligence Group, which became the Central Intelligence Agency under the National Security Act of July 26, 1947), urged that, in the light of the cumulatively terrifying reports flowing in from American agents all over Europe, measures should quickly be taken to coordinate Western defenses.

Granted his impetuous nature, and his fundamental views, Truman was surprisingly slow to react to Stalin's provocative behavior. He was being advised by his fellow—Southern Democrat James Byrne, (1879—1972), whom he had made secretary of state. Byrnes, a sly and clever man and consummate politician, who might easily have been in Truman's place if events had moved a little differently, had no time for what he called `those little bastards at the State Department,' and believed he could conduct his own negotiations with the Soviet leadership, not always telling his President what he was doing. Truman complained: `I have to read the newspaper to find out about American foreign policy'—the beginnings of the suspicion which led him to replace Byrnes by General Marshall in 1947. Truman had no patience with those he designated `the striped pants boys at the State Department,' but he could not ignore the overwhelming body of evidence in cables and dispatches, and he warned Byrnes to be firm. At the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers in December 1945, Stalin's intransigence, transmitted through Molotov, brought matters to a head. Byrnes reported that Russia was `trying to do in a slick—dip way what Hitler used to do in domineering over smaller countries by force.' When Byrnes reported back, Truman made his mind up (January 5, 1946): `I do not think we should play compromise any longer ... I am tired of babying the Soviets.' The next month a well—timed 8,000—word cable arrived from George Kennan in Moscow, which crystalized what most people were beginning to feel about the Soviet threat—the `Long Telegram' as it came to be known. `It reads exactly,' its author wrote later, `like one of those primers put out by alarmed congressional committees ... designed to arouse the citizenry to the dangers of the Communist conspiracy.'

A fortnight later, on March 5, Winston Churchill, at Truman's invitation, came to Fulton, Missouri, and delivered, with the President's strong approval, his famous speech insisting that `From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the Continent of Europe' and demanding that America and its allies should work together without delay to provide `an overwhelming assurance of security.' The polls showed that 81 percent of Americans favored his idea of a permanent military alliance. This was a decisive moment in

modern world history. Churchill complained that, on the trip, he had lost $75 playing poker with Truman: `But it was worth it.'

The aggressive behavior of the Communists completed the political education of President Truman and drew from him stronger and stronger reactions. The same month, Russia missed its deadline for the withdrawal of its troops from Iran, and did so only after Truman ordered an angry confrontation at the UN. In August 1946 the Yugoslavs shot down two American transport planes, and the same month Stalin began to put pressure on Turkey. Truman responded by upgrading Donovan's intelligence organization, celebrating the move with a White House party at which he handed out black hats, cloaks, and wooden daggers, and personally stuck a false mustache on the face of Admiral Bill Leahy. American and British intelligence agencies resumed full war—style contact and their air forces began exchanging and coordinating plans again; the US and Canada formed a joint air and anti—submarine defense system. America was still disarming at this stage, and Truman, as he was well aware, did not dispose of much offensive power. Byrnes' complacent assumption that America's possession of nuclear weapons would frighten the Soviets proved unfounded: their information from agents within the US defense establishment probably gave them an accurate idea of the limits of America's nuclear capability. By mid—1946, the US had only seven A—bombs, and a year later the number had risen to thirteen. Moreover, US B29 bombers, based as they then were in Louisiana, California, and Texas, could not fly direct to Russia and it was calculated that it would take a fortnight to drop A—bombs on Russian targets. Not until June 1950 did the United States possess bombers capable of flying on raids to Russia and back.

On the other hand, America's economic and financial power, both absolutely and in relation to the rest of the world, was awesome. Truman remarked in a radio address to the nation in August 1945: `We tell ourselves we have emerged from this war the most powerful nation in this world—the most powerful nation, perhaps, in all history. That is true, but not in the sense some of us believe it to be true.' Truman was referring essentially to the industrial capacity of the country. In the second half of the 1940s the United States had a productive preponderance over the rest of the world never before attained by any one power, and most unlikely to be experienced ever again. With only 7 percent of the world's population, it had 42 percent of its income and half its manufacturing capacity. It produced 57.5 percent of the world's steel, 43.5 percent of its electricity, 62 percent of its oil, 8o percent of its automobiles. It owned three—quarters of the world's gold. Its per—capita income was $1,450, the next group (Canada, Great Britain, New Zealand, Switzerland) was only between $700 and $900. Calorie consumption per day was about 3,000, some 50 percent more than in western Europe."

It is true that in the United States the distribution of wealth was uneven. In 1947, one—third of American homes still had no running water and two—fifths no flush lavatories. This was largely a rural problem: in 1945, 17.5 percent of the population, or 24.4 million, still lived on the soil and farmed. They had cars and they ate well but many lacked amenities, let alone entertainment, and this was one reason Americans were fleeing the land: the 6 million farmers of 1945 had been halved by 1970, when the farming population had fallen to 4.8 percent of the whole. But in global terms the dollar was almighty, and the federal government had the disposal of huge sums. In 1939 its income had been $9.4 billion only. By 1945 it had risen to $95.2 billion, partly by raising the national debt, from $56.9 billion in December 1941 to $252.7 billion in December 1945, but partly by massive increases in taxation. Income tax rose steadily and steeply, especially after the tax—withholding system from paychecks (copied from the heavily taxed British) was introduced in 1943. Nor did it return to prewar levels after the end of the war. On

the contrary: rates peaked in the 1950s with a range of 20 to 91 percent on individuals and a 52 percent corporate rate. Actual federal income fell after 1945, dropping to a postwar low of $36.5 billion in 1948, then rising again until it reached $43.1 billion just before the start of the Korean War. During the 1940s and continuing into the early 1960s, taxation in relation to Gross National Product was higher in the United States than at any other period in the country's history, and this meant that the government had at its disposal the means to bolster, sustain, and reinvigorate the world, and especially Europe, in the face of Soviet encroachments. Truman was the first American statesman to grasp that the United States was physically and financially able to rescue the world not merely in war, but in peace too, and to keep up the effort for the foreseeable future.

Truman felt that this burden could be shouldered without prejudice to the country's future because of the speed at which the US economy had grown and continued to grow. GNP (in constant 1939 dollars) had risen from $88.6 billion in 1939 to $135 billion in 1945. The war had enormously benefited the US economy, raising its productive capacity by nearly 50 percent and its actual output of goods to well over 50 percent. The economy had been growing at the rate of 15 percent annually, a rate never reached before, or since, and much of this was civil production to meet the demands of a nation now enjoying full employment and high wages. This was made possible by very rapid increases in productivity, as new and improved machine—tools and machinery were made and installed. Truman knew that he was president of a country which was now responsible for more than half the world's manufactured goods and a third of the world's production of all kinds. It was by far the world's largest exporter, transporting its goods in US—owned ships constituting half the world's mercantile fleet. With such a preponderance, action to help humanity to survive, and the democracies to retain their freedom and independence, was dictated by moral obligation as well as by political prudence. It was in these circumstances that American isolationism, insofar as it had ever existed, was finally put to rest and interred for ever.

Truman was stimulated into activity by a despairing plea from Britain on February 21, 1947. The British had spent a quarter of their net wealth on the war and accumulated crippling foreign debts. America had made Britain a loan after the end of Lend—Lease but this had soon been swallowed up as the British had spent over $3 billion on international relief to stop Europe from starving. This included large sums devoted to keeping Greece and Turkey out of Stalin's clutches. The winter of 1946—7 in western Europe was one of the harshest in modern history and virtually brought the British economy to a standstill. The British government now said they could support the Greek—Turkey burden no longer and appealed for US help. On February 23 Truman decided he would have to take it on, but first he held a meeting in the Oval Office to outline the idea to leading Congressmen. It was one of the most decisive ever held there. General Marshall, who had just taken over as secretary of state, was still mastering his brief and much of the talking was done by his imperious deputy, Dean Acheson. Acheson said that `Soviet pressure' on the Near East had brought it to a point where a breakthrough `might open three continents to Soviet penetration.' Like `apples in a barrel infected by one rotten one,' the 'corruption' of Greece would `infect Iran and all the East.' It would `carry infection to Africa from Asia Minor and Egypt' and `to Europe through Italy and France.' Soviet Russia was `playing one of the biggest gambles in history at minimal cost.' It did not need to win them all: `even one or two offered immense gains.' Only America was `in a position to break up the play.' These were the stakes which British withdrawal `offered to an eager and ruthless opponent.' When he finished there was a long silence. Then Senator Arthur Vandenberg, former isolationist and now chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, spoke for all his colleagues: `Mr.

President if you will say that to the Congress and the country, I will support you and I believe most of its members will do the same.

The result was the appearance of Truman before a special session of both Houses of Congress on March 12, 1947 and the annunciation of what was immediately called the Truman Doctrine: `I believe it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure.' Truman did not say how long such support might be necessary but he indicated that it must be provided for as long as was needed, which might be many years. In short, the US was now undertaking an open—ended commitment, both military and economic, to preserve democracy in the world. It had the means, and it had the will, because it had the men: Truman himself, leading two whole generations of active internationalists, young and old, who had learned from experience and history that America had to take its full part in the world, for the sake of the human race. These men, military and civil, politicians and diplomats, included Eisenhower, Marshall, MacArthur, Dean Acheson, Averell Harriman, George Kennan, John McCloy, Charles Bohlen, Robert Lovett, and many leading senators and congressmen, of whom the `born again' Vandenberg was representative. In natural abilities and experience, in clarity of mind and in magnanimity, they were probably the finest group of American leaders since the Founding Fathers. And, in their impact upon America, and its role in the world, they were of comparable significance.

Of these men, the most important, after Truman, was Marshall. Truman wrote of him: `He is the great one of the age. I am surely lucky to have his friendship and support.' Truman often felt his colleagues and subordinates were more talented than he was, in one way or another, but Marshall he freely acknowledged to be the better man too. The general was not a talkative or even a particularly articulate man, and sometimes he could be disconcertingly silent. But no American of his times inspired so much awe and respect, even in great and powerful men like Eisenhower. He was able to command the bipartisan support of Congress because its members always felt he rose above politics and sought the national interest without regard to party or class or lobby. He had the same effect on most of the foreign leaders with whom he had dealings, even 'Stonebottom' Molotov. In April 1947, at a bibulous dinner in Moscow, an inebriated Molotov turned to Marshall and said nastily: `Now that soldiers have become statesmen in America, are the troops goose—stepping?' Marshall, `his eyes icy gray,' turned to Bohlen who was translating and said: `Please tell Mr Molotov that I'm not sure I understand the purport of his remark, but if it is what I think it is, *tell him I do not like it.*' Thereafter, Molotov, who had signed the death warrants of tens of thousands, treated the general with the cowed deference he normally reserved only for his master, Stalin.

However, Marshall was not just a personality, he was an organizer; indeed, he was an administrative genius, as he had proved during the war. What was now required, from America, as it was committed to a global strategy of military, diplomatic, and economic outreach, were institutional and structural changes. Marshall was just the man to advise Truman on their shape and magnitude, and indeed to carry out some of them directly himself. As a result, on July 26, —1947, Congress passed the National Security Act, which amalgamated all political control of the forces in the Department of Defense, set up the new Central Intelligence Agency from an amalgam of its forebears and created an entirely new body, the National Security Council, to give expert advice directly to the President on all matters affecting the defense and security of the nation. Within a decade, the CIA's annual budget, not subjected to Congressional scrutiny, had swollen to an estimated $1 billion and its personnel to over 30,000. The National Security Council, routinely presided over, at the beginning, by the head of the CIA, included at its formal

meetings the President, Vice—President, Secretary of State, and Defense Secretary, with the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs directing its staff, which by 1980 had grown to 1,600. These moves, together with the expansion, retraining, and reequipping of the US diplomatic service, completed what might be called the professionalization of America's defense and foreign policy effort.

On June 5, 1947, at the Harvard Commencement, the new Secretary of State unveiled what became the Marshall Plan. It was originally a loosely worded proposal that all the European nations, including Russia, cooperate in bringing about a recovery of the entire continent, with the US providing the pump—priming finance. Stalin rejected the offer on Russia's behalf, and vetoed the desire of Poland and Czechoslovakia to participate. But the nations of western Europe drafted programs submitted to a conference at Paris, June 27—July 2, and on September 22 it was estimated that their joint needs would require between $16 and $22 billion of US aid. On December 19, 1947 Truman submitted to Congress a $17 billion European Recovery Program, and Senator Vandenberg helped to steer the appropriations through. There was initially some opposition, but once again Stalin came to the rescue. The brutal Communist *coup d'etat* he staged in Czechoslovakia in February 1948 helped to push what was to become the first of a huge series of foreign—aid Bills through Congress. In the end, the Marshall Plan channeled about $13 billion of US assistance into the European economies, and it must be regarded as perhaps the most successful scheme of its kind in history. It was particularly effective in reinvigorating the economies of Germany, France, and Italy. It made practical sense for the US too because by the second quarter of 1947 America's export surplus was running at an annual rate of $12.5 billion, and Marshall Aid helped to enable Europe to continue to take US goods.

European economic recovery was one thing, and in the long run the most important thing, but in the short term what was also needed was security from Soviet Communist aggression and subversion, and this could be provided only by a permanent and active US military presence. It took some time before Truman, and the US military, grasped that this was inevitable, though repatriation of American forces slowed down steadily in 1947. But Stalin, as always, was happy to oblige with his greed. Unable to agree on a peace formula for one Germany, the rival blocs had been creating two Germanies in 1946, with Berlin, in which each of the four powers (the US, Britain, France, and Russia) had its own zone, as an isolated enclave in Russian—occupied East Germany. On June 18, 1948, as a purely administrative measure, the three Western Allies announced a new German currency for their zones. Six days later, Stalin took this as a pretext for an attempt by force to extinguish the Berlin enclave, by blocking road access to the Western zones there, and cutting off its electricity.

Truman grasped that the Berlin Crisis, the first large—scale formal confrontation of the Cold War, was an event of peculiar significance. Nikita Khrushchev later characterized Stalin's Berlin move as `prodding the capitalist world with the tip of a bayonet,' to see what would be the response. Truman was immediately quite clear what the response would be: `We would stay, period.' He was confirmed in his first reaction by the views of the US Zone Commander, General Lucius Clay. Clay had hitherto been the most reluctant of the Cold Warriors; now he changed decisively, and recommended clearing the approach roads by armed convoys. This was rejected as needlessly provocative, but Truman also rejected the more conciliatory approach of the nervous Forrestal, the Defense Secretary, who wanted, as the President put it, ‚to hedge' and supplied him with `alibi memos.' Truman noted in his diary, July 19: `We'll stay in Berlin—come what may. I don't pass the buck nor do I alibi out of any decision I make.'

Forrestal was nervous partly by temperament, partly also because he was aware of what he called `the inadequacy of United States preparations for global conflict.' Truman had been furious when he discovered, on April 3, 1947, that while materials for twelve A—bombs existed in US arsenals, none was assembled for delivery. He ordered the rapid creation of a 400—bomb stockpile. But not enough had been delivered by mid—1948 to carry through even what the US Air Force termed `Operation Pincher,' which called for the complete destruction of the Soviet oil industry." Nonetheless Truman sent the first three squadrons of B29 bombers to bases in Britain and Germany. They were not actually equipped to deliver A—bombs but Truman rightly assumed that Stalin would think they were, and it was the closest he came to playing the atomic card during his presidency. He made it clear to his closest colleagues, as Forrestal recorded in his diary, that he was quite prepared, if absolutely necessary, to use A—bombs against Russia. But, in terms of the actual physical response to the Berlin Blockade, he decided to frustrate it by mounting an airlift, which had the additional merit of providing Stalin, and the whole world, with an awesome demonstration of American airpower. And it worked; the airlift was flying in 4,500 tons a day by December 1948 and 81,000 tons a day by spring 1949, as much as had been carried by road and rail when the cut—off came. On May 12, 1949, the Russians climbed down.

This was victory of a sort, but the episode had served to draw everyone's attention, not least Truman's, to the sheer inadequacy of America's, and the West's, military forces on the ground, faced with a Soviet army which had stabilized at 2.5 million, plus an armed police of 400,000, and which seemed to have almost unlimited resources of armor and artillery. The creation of a new West German state, and of a permanent military association of Western powers, was the prime object of American policy in the second half of 1948.

In the meantime Truman needed the endorsement of the electorate for his forceful foreign and defense policies. Truman was an unelected president, though he had never allowed this to inhibit his capacity to take decisions of the highest importance promptly and in masterful fashion. But many people, including a lot of Democrats, assumed he could never get himself elected in his own right, and they toyed seriously with the idea of drafting General Eisenhower, now a retired general and college president. The Democrats finally nominated Truman, at their convention in Philadelphia in July, but they took some time about it and, in the process, adopted civil rights measures which led the South to bolt the party and form the Dixiecrats (the states' rights Democratic Party), which nominated J. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina as presidential candidate. Since Truman was also facing a liberal challenge in Northern states, in the shape of Henry Wallace, an old FDR crony whom Truman had sacked in 1947 as secretary of agriculture, for being `soft on Communism' and a prize pest, his chances looked slim. The convention would not even allow him to pick his own running mate, foisting on him `old man Barkley,' as the President called him (Alban Barkley, 1877—1956, former Senate Majority Leader). Truman had wanted the forceful Northern liberal William O. Douglas (1898—1980) from the Supreme Court to help fend off the Wallace challenge. But Douglas retorted woundingly that he `didn't want to be a number—two man to a number—two man,' which provoked from the President one of his wrathful mixed metaphors: `I stuck my neck out all the way for Douglas and he cut the limb from under me.' However, he accepted the hand his party had dealt him philosophically and girded himself for battle, telling his partner, in words which soon became famous, 'I'll mow 'em down, Alban, and I'll give 'em hell! '

The 1948 campaign was the last whistle—stop, pre—television American election campaign. Actually it was the first in which the party conventions were televised. As far back as 1932 there

were twelve regularly operating TV stations in the US, reaching 30,000 homes. But transcontinental TV broadcasts were not to begin till 1951 and in 1948 only 200,000 American homes had TV. On the other hand, the US still had the world's most extensive (and luxurious) railroad system, with over 200,000 miles of track, and some of the finest transcontinental trains in railroad history, albeit the network was already shrinking, declining by 17,000 miles in the twenty years 1940—60. Truman took full advantage of this huge network for his campaign. He made two air trips, to Miami and Ralegh, October 18—19 (US civil airlines were already carrying 50 million passengers a year), but most of his speechmaking was done on three big railroad swings, September 17—October 2, October 6—16, and October 23—30. The first and busiest covered seventeen states from Pennsylvania to California and involved a dozen rear—platform appearances every day, plus thirteen major set speeches.

Truman abounded in vigorous vignettes: the Republicans were 'gluttons for privilege' who had `stuck a pitchfork in the farmer's back.' Undeterred by the opinion surveys, which predicted an easy victory for the Republican challenger, again Governor Dewey of New York, Truman barked out that electors would `throw the Galluping polls right into the ashcan—you watch 'em.' Dewey was a good administrator and a reliable campaigner. But he was short and a little too neat in his dress, and he was damaged by being called the `Little Man on the Wedding Cake.' The Republicans were complacent, which meant they did not find it easy to raise cash, and the Democrats actually outspent them by $2.7 million to $2.1 million.

Truman's whistle—stop progress began by attracting small crowds but his aides, such as Clark Clifford, caught the headlines by standing at the back and shouting when Truman began to speak: `Give 'em hell, Harry!' and this was soon taken up by genuine members of the audience. By the end, Truman was pulling bigger numbers than FDR had in 1944. The journalist Robert J. Donovan described the Truman oratory as `sharp speeches fairly criticizing Republican policy and defending New Deal liberalism, mixed with sophistries, bunkum piled higher than haystacks, and demagoguery tooting merrily down the track.' When a *Newsweek* survey of fifty leading journalists reported that all predicted Truman would lose, he commented, `I know every one of those fifty fellows and not one of them has enough sense to pound sand into a rathole.' The *Chicago Tribune* won itself a little historical notoriety by going to press on election night with the front—page headline: 'Dewey Defeats Truman,' which the reelected President was able to hold aloft in triumph the next day. In fact Truman got 24,105,812 votes (49.5 percent) to Dewey's 21,970,065 (45.1 percent), with Thurmond and Wallace each getting about 1.2 million. In college terms, the score was Truman 303, Dewey 189, Thurmond 39, Wallace none. Truman replicated FDR's feat of 1944 in carrying all thirteen of America's biggest cities with populations over 500,000, but the chief identifiable reason for his victory was a late—stage swing in the farm vote, then still important.

Thus reassured of popular support, Truman was able to pursue the policies begun with his doctrine. On April 4, the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington by the United States, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, and Portugal (Greece and Turkey joined in 1952, West Germany in 1955). The treaty embodied the basic principle of collective security, stipulating that an attack on any one member would be considered an attack upon all, and it set up an Organization, with an integrated command headquarters, based in Paris (SHAPE), to which were assigned forces from all the signatories. General Eisenhower was recalled to duty and served as the first Supreme Allied Commander, 1950—2. Thus collective security, for the lack of which World War Two had to be fought, at last came into being, not just in principle but in fact and practice, and of all the postwar

institutions, NATO has proved one of the most durable and, perhaps, the single most effective, keeping the peace for half a century and more.

Simultaneously, America took steps to insure that it possessed the military resources to sustain the new alliance. In February—March 1949, a group of State Department and Defense officials drafted a document called `National Security Council 68,' which laid down the main lines of American foreign and defense policy for the next forty years, until the collapse of the Soviet regime and empire in the late 1980s. It was based on the proposition that America, as the greatest independent democratic power, had moral, political, and ideological obligations to preserve free institutions throughout the world, and must equip itself with the military means to shoulder them. It must possess adequate conventional forces as well as nuclear striking power. This point was underlined on September 3, 1949 when a B29, on patrol in the north Pacific at 18,000 feet, picked up positive evidence that Russia had exploded its first nuclear weapon at the end of August. The atomic monopoly was over. On January 31, 1950, after long behind—the—scenes argument, Truman authorized the development of the hydrogen bomb or the `Super.' He was strongly backed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, especially General Bradley (now his favorite general), and by Dean Acheson. The matter was finally decided when he put the question to his three—man advisory committee of Acheson, Lilienthal (in charge of nuclear development), and Defense Secretary Louis Johnson, `Can the Russians do it?' and received the unanimous answer: `Yes.' Truman: `Then we have no choice. We will go ahead.' The first hydrogen bomb, detonated in November 1952, was a combination of deuterium and tritium and vaporized its entire test island in the Pacific, digging a crater a mile long and 175 feet deep. The second (March 1954) used lithium and deuterium and released still greater energy.

In the meantime, NSC 68 noted that the Russians used 13.8 percent of their GNP for defense, as opposed to America's 6—7 percent, and it recommended that, to secure adequate security, America should be prepared to devote up to 20 percent of its GNP to this purpose. The document was finally approved in April 1950, completing the historic establishment of America's commitment to the outside world. Gradually it produced specific alliances or agreed obligations to forty—seven nations and led American forces to build up or occupy 675 bases and station a million troops overseas, as well as enormous air forces and fleets.

Some of these forces were committed in accordance with treaty organizations like NATO or the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization, signed at Manila on September 8, 1954 by the US, Philippines (which had become independent on July 4, 1946), Thailand, Pakistan, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, and France. This alliance, though modeled on NATO, never had its cohesive power or joint infrastructures: Pakistan withdrew from it in 1972 and France in 1973, and it disbanded by mutual consent in 1977. But it served its purpose in the 1950s and 1960s.

In the Middle East, on whose oil supplies the United States became increasingly dependent during the second half of the 20th century, efforts to create a similar permanent alliance, known as the Bagdad Pact, were eventually to fail (1955), but in the meantime, thanks largely to Truman's sagacity and foresight, the state of Israel came into being, and proved itself a reliable if strong—minded and highly independent American ally. Truman's commitment to a Zionist state was part—emotional, part—calculating. He felt sorry for Jewish refugees. He saw the Jews in Palestine as the underdogs. On the other hand, at the time Israel came into being, 1947—8, Truman was the underdog himself in the coming election, and he needed the Jewish vote. In May 1947, the Palestine problem came before the UN. A special committee, asked to produce a plan, produced two. A minority recommended a federated binational state. The majority favored two states, one Jewish, one Arab. On November 29, 1947, thanks to Truman's vigorous backing, the

majority plan, making the birth of Israel possible, was endorsed by the General Assembly, thirty—three votes to thirteen, with ten abstentions. For reasons which are still mysterious, Stalin, who was always anti—semitic and usually anti—Zionist too, was going through a brief philo—semitic phase, and so also helped to bring the new state into existence.

Israel's declaration of independence on May 14, 1948 was preceded by an acrimonious debate in Washington, in which Truman, who favored immediate *de facto* recognition, found himself opposed by both the State Department and the Pentagon. Marshall, in what Clark Clifford called `a righteous God—damned Baptist tone,' said that Truman was subordinating an international problem to domestic politics and diminishing the dignity of the presidency. It would lose Truman his own vote in the coming election, he added. The Defense Secretary, James Forrestal, bitterly denounced the Jewish lobby: `No group in this country should be permitted to influence our policy to the point where it would endanger our national security.' There was also vehement opposition from the oil interests. Max Trornburg of Cal—Tex said that Truman had `extinguished the moral prestige of America' and destroyed `Arab faith in her ideals.' Nonetheless, Truman went ahead and accorded Israel *de facto* recognition, upgraded to *de jure* after the US elections. Events have justified this policy. Not only did Israel survive four separate wars for its existence but it contrived to preserve its constitutional integrity and democratic practices so that, half a century later, it remained the only working democracy in the Middle East, with close military, economic, and cultural links with the United States.

Over this half—century, Israel had been the biggest single beneficiary of US foreign aid and overseas assistance programs. But it was only one of many. Truman took a particular interest in what he called `making the Palestine desert blossom,' but he was just as interested in helping the region as a whole. He told a dinner of businessmen in October 1949 that he wanted US assistance to help restore `the Mesopotamian Valley' to its fruitfulness `as the Garden of Eden' in which `3o million people could live.' And he explained how `the Zambezi River Valley in Africa' could be converted into `sections comparable to the Tennessee Valley in our own country if the people of those regions only had access to the "know how" which we possessed.' In 1943 the United States had helped to organize the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and had been by far its principal benefactor. Truman had taken a particular interest in its work and he was pleased that, at the end of the war, polls showed that 90 percent of the American people favored continued food rationing if this were necessary to enable food to go to the hungry peoples of Europe and Asia. Coming from the Midwest, where `help your neighbor if he needs it' was the absolute rule, it seemed to him natural that the United States, out of its plenty, should come to the rescue of the rest of the world, but in a practical spirit of prudence (he strongly dissented from Henry Wallace's proposal for indiscriminate US aid). In June 1947 UNRRA made a final accounting. It had shipped abroad a total of 23,405,978 tons, 44 percent of it foodstuffs, 22 percent industrial
equipment, 15 percent clothing, and 11 percent agricultural supplies, he value amounting to $2,768,373,000. In addition America had provided specific sums to meet particular emergencies in a variety of countries. In all, it had provided $9 billion in aid. On top of this there had been the $13 billion spent on the Marshall Plan.

But that was not enough, Truman felt, to satisfy `the conscience of the American people.' He repeatedly asserted, `America cannot remain healthy and happy in the same world where millions of human beings are starving.' With his election victory behind him, Truman insisted on inserting, as `Point Four' of his inaugural address of January 1949, to the surprise and consternation of the State Department, and as part of his `program for peace and freedom,' a

pledge of `a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.' Truman was the first statesman to draw attention, at a global level, to the vast disparities between the `have' and the `have—not' areas of the world, and to insist that `More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery.' He was likewise the first to do anything about it. He considered Point Four the most important peace policy of his entire administration. He told a press conference it had been in his mind `ever since the Marshall Plan had been inaugurated.' It had `originated with the Greece and Turkey proposition. Been studying it ever since.' He said he fantasized about a world aid scheme, financed by the US, while studying the huge globe in his office. Knowing Congress, he robustly insisted that the scheme was not wholly disinterested—it was also self—interested. America and other Western countries needed to keep their industrial plant `going at full tilt for a century.' And the idea was also `preventing the expansion of Communism in the free world.'

Truman encountered remarkably little opposition from Congress for his plans. The original appropriation was only $34.5 million. In the fiscal year 1952 its budget was increased to $147.9 million. The federal government's generosity was matched by that of many big companies. Westinghouse operated `its own private Point Four' by licensing foreign manufacturers to use its techniques and processes, helping them to design their plants, and training their operatives. Sears, Roebuck became `one of Point Four's most aggressive if unofficial vessels' by teaching industrial techniques and merchandising to the Brazilians and others. But taxpayers' money provided the main effort. By 1953 there were 2,445 US technicians working in thirty—five foreign countries, engaged in assisting with food production, railroad efficiency, modern mining techniques, public health, central banks and government administration, every conceivable kind of industrial process, and services ranging from housing to meteorological forecasts. Point Four was enhanced by bilateral aid agreements, and the sums spent by the US government continued to increase throughout the 1950s and 1960s. By the 1970s, when the quantity of US foreign aid began to decline, over $150 billion had been spent, two—thirds of it outside western Europe.' This effort, in absolute or relative terms and from whatever viewpoint it is regarded, was wholly without precedent in human history, and is likely to remain the biggest single act of national generosity on record. That much of the aid was wasted is unfortunately true. That most of it helped is equally sure. That, during this unique period of giving, anti—Americanism increased in the world, is likewise undeniable. But then what good deed in history ever went unpunished? Truman, who initiated it all, was content with the teaching of the Judeo—Christian ethic, that virtue is its own reward.

Behind the construction of America's network of worldwide bases, and behind the overseas aid program, was the strategy of `containment.' This geopolitical philosophy was first set out in an article published in *Foreign Affairs*, July 1947, entitled `The Sources of Soviet Conduct,' and signed `X' (George Kennan). It spoke of the need for the US to secure the `patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansionist tendencies' by `the adroit and vigilant application of counterforce at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points.' This was the alternative to the strategy of `rollback' favored in some Republican circles, which called for the application of military and diplomatic pressure to force the Soviet Empire to `disgorge.' But rollback risked a third world war, which became increasingly unthinkable as Russia secured its first atomic weapon and then was assumed to be making hydrogen bombs too. Rollback exponents never quite spelled out what they intended to do to make their policy work, and it

certainly did not catch on with most of the American public. So containment became standard and permanent American policy, and its application, through the Marshall Plan and NATO, and the response to the Berlin Blockade, worked very well in Europe until, in the fullness of time, the Soviet Empire disgorged of its own volition and from its own weakness, and Communism was indeed rolled back throughout eastern Europe and to the Urals and beyond.

Where containment did not work, initially, was in the Far East, probably because it was applied too late. FDR had backed the corrupt Kuomintang Party leader, Chiang Kai—shek, who had received military aid and Lend—Lease in considerable quantities. Truman had continued this policy. Chiang got a $500 million `economic stabilization loan' and a total of $2 billion in the years 1945—9. But efforts to reconcile the Kuomintang with the Chinese Communist leader Mao Tse—tung, who had his own battle—hardened peasant army, failed—General Marshall led a mission to China to no effect—and, once civil war started in earnest, all the American aid vanished in a morass of inflation. The collapse of the currency meant that Chiang's originally enormous army disintegrated—much of it was integrated with Mao's forces—and by April 1949 Mao had crossed the Yangtze, taking the capital, Nanking, by the end of the month. Chiang was driven out of mainland China into the island of Taiwan, which he turned into a fortress, protected by the US Seventh Fleet. Truman was bitterly accused by the Republicans and the China Lobby of having `lost China,' but the truth is China lost itself. The question then was: how was the line of containment now to be drawn in the Far East?

Once again, Stalin came to the rescue of uncertain American strategists. Doubts about where the line lay were reinforced by a foolish speech made by Dean Acheson, now Secretary of State, at the National Press Club in Washington on January 12, 1950. He was concerned to argue that, though China was now Communist, its leader Mao was certain to quarrel with Stalin, just as Marshal Tito, the independent Communist leader of Yugoslavia, had done. But in making this point—which eventually was justified by events—he appeared to exclude Taiwan, Indochina and Korea from the American defensive perimeter. The speech was clearly read and noted by Stalin, who was anxious not to repeat his mistake with Tito and was, at that moment, unknown to Acheson, making conciliatory gestures to Mao. Acheson's reference to an inevitable Russo—Chinese break reminded Stalin of the danger, and his apparent omission of Korea as an American vital interest pointed to the remedy. Stalin decided that a limited proxy war in Korea would be the means to teach China where its true interests lay. If this was indeed Stalin's reasoning, it proved correct: Korea postponed the Soviet—Chinese break for a decade. But in the meantime it brought war. Stalin seems to have agreed with Kim 11—Sung, the North Korean Communist dictator, in the spring of 1950, that in November he could make a limited push across the 38th parallel, which divided Communist North from non—Communist South Korea, where 500 US troops were stationed as advisors. But Kim was not a cautious or a biddable man. He took Stalin's hint as permission to stage a full—scale invasion, and he launched it on June 25.

When Acheson gave Truman the news on Sunday, June 26, that the invasion was on a huge scale, the President's reply was `Dean, we've got to stop the sons—of—bitches no matter what.' That was the Truman style, and that is the way he told it. In fact the decision to intervene was a regular deliberative process, but there is no doubt that Truman's first response, taken in ten seconds, was as he later recollected. He felt the US was in a position to act firmly. Its atomic stockpile was now approaching 500 bombs, and 264 aircraft were capable of delivering them on Soviet targets. General MacArthur, the supremo in Japan, took over, and Truman began by allowing him his head, including the launching, on September 15, 1950, of the Inchon landings, a daring and risky venture which produced a rapid and total victory. Truman gave his approval to

NSC 81/1, which allowed for operations north of the 38th parallel and the military occupation of North Korea, provided that neither China nor Russia intervened in the war. George Marshall, now Secretary of Defense, telegraphed MacArthur September 29: `We want you to feel unhampered tactically and strategically to proceed north of 38th parallel.'

Under cover of the crisis, China first swallowed quasi—independent Tibet (October 21, 1950), then as American troops approached its borders, attacked with a massive `volunteer army' (November 28). Truman had flown 7,500 miles to see MacArthur on Wake Island on October 13, had awarded him the Distinguished Service Medal, citing his `vision, judgment, indomitable will, gallantry and tenacity,' and then, in a major speech in San Francisco four days later, had proclaimed his complete accord with the proud general. But the Chinese intervention, which MacArthur had told him at Wake could not and would not happen, changed everything. The Americans were sent reeling back and MacArthur's response was to recommend full—scale military action against China: intensive bombing of industrial areas, a full coastal blockade, and support for Taiwanese attacks on the mainland. The Chinese offensive was in fact reversed by MacArthur's subordinate, General Matthew Ridgway, by skillful deployment of the military resources already available in Korea, and without any necessity for direct attacks on China.

But by this time MacArthur had taken to issuing in public his own ideas of what should be done, even if they conflicted with what he knew to be Washington's position. This led to a crisis on March 24, 1951, when a statement by the general forced Truman to cancel a message of his own, calling for negotiations. The problem became more acute on April 5 when the House Minority Leader, Joe Martin, released an exchange of letters with MacArthur in which the general appeared endorse the Republicans' policy of `maximum counterforce,' ending 'There is no substitute for victory.' This was a direct intervention in politics, and unacceptable. Truman noted in his diary: `This looks like the last straw. Rank insubordination.' Again, though his mind was now pretty well made up that MacArthur would have to go, Truman moved with deliberation, consulting with Acheson, Marshall, Harriman, and Bradley (now chairman of the Combined Chiefs of staff). All supported dismissal. Congressional leaders, when consulted, had more mixed reactions. Nonetheless, on April 9 Truman finally decided, and ordered Bradley to set the dismissal machinery in motion. He later recalled he had told Bradley: `The son—of—a—bitch isn't going to resign on me, *I want him fired*.'

The reaction to the MacArthur dismissal was even more violent than Truman had expected, and for an entire year majority public opinion ranked itself ferociously against him. He said, characteristically, of the hostile polls: `I wonder how far Moses would have gone if he had taken a poll in Egypt? What would Jesus Christ have preached if he had taken a poll in the land of Israel? ... It isn't [polls] that count. It is right and wrong, and leadership—men with fortitude, honesty and a belief in the right that make epochs in the history of the world.' But gradually the rage died down, and MacArthur's own highly emotional appearance before a joint session of Congress was more a valedictory than a gesture of defiance. The conviction gradually spread that Truman had been right, and many now see the episode as his finest hour, a forceful and perhaps long overdue reassertion of the elective, civil power over an undoubted military hero who had ignored the constitutional chain command.

The truth is, Truman kept in mind, which MacArthur did not, that the object of US intervention in Korea was not to start a third world war, but to prevent one. That is what it did. The war settled down to a stalemate. Negotiations scaled down and eventually ended (July 27, 1953) the fighting, though the country remained divided and the cease—fire line tense. The war was costly. US casualties included 3 3,629 battle deaths, 20,617 non—hostile deaths, and

103,284 wounded. There were in addition 8,177 missing and, of the 7,140 servicemen made prisoner, only 3,746 were repatriated. Direct military expenses were over $54 billion. All this was in addition to Allied casualties in the UN force, 415,000 deaths in the South Korean forces, and an estimated 520,000 among the North Koreans (Chinese casualties have never been divulged but are believed to have been over 250,000). Nothing was gained by either side. But America had demonstrated its willingness to defend the policy of containment in battle, and at the same time prudence in restraining its superior firepower. For both, Truman was personally responsible, and the verdict on his policy is that the United States has never had to fight another Korea.

All the same, after the MacArthur sacking it was downhill all the way for Truman, who found himself caught up in a series of domestic scandals: the sleaziness of machine—politics came back to haunt the old warrior. By 1950—1, the Democrats had controlled the administration for twenty years and the rot had set in deeply in many branches. Egregiously venal, it turned out, were the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Tax Department of the Justice Department. The scandals uncovered there in 1951 were particularly damaging to Truman at a time when, to fight the Korean War, he was requesting one round of tax increases after another. The public was furious at successive reports of tax—fixing by corrupt patronage appointees. By the end of the year no fewer than fifty—seven tax officials had been forced into resignation and many were subsequently convicted. Truman eventually introduced civil service status for tax collectors and took them out of the patronage system altogether. But his response to the initial rumblings of scandal had been slow, inadequate, and marked by poor public relations. Ironically enough it was the piddling nature of the sums stolen by comparatively junior officials which diminished the administration, and with it the President. A top Washington columnist, Joseph Alsop, commenting on the misdemeanors of a ridiculous miscreant called T. Lamar Caudle, wrote: `One would have more respect for men like Caudle if they were big thieves on their own, but in fact they are mainly petty favor takers.'

Truman continued to hold his head high. He invariably rose at 5 A.M., shaved, dressed, then took a vigorous walk at the old army quick—march tempo of 120 paces to the minute, accompanied by panting Secret Servicemen and reporters, who were allowed to put questions if they contrived to keep up with the President. Then back to the White House for a shot of bourbon, a rubdown, and breakfast. He was at his desk by 7 A.M., and he worked hard all day, except for a brief nap after lunch and a swim in the pool, his head bolt upright, wearing his glasses. He and his cherished wife Bess led an exemplary family life. He never seems to have looked at another woman. He said he fell in love with her when he was six and she was five in 189o, later had a long, anxious courtship of seven years, and married in 1919. Their marriage lasted fifty—three years, till Truman's death, aged eighty—eight, in 1972. Bess lived on; the headline in the *New York Times* in October 1982 summed it up perfectly: 'Bess Truman is Dead at 97; Was President's "Full Partner." '

Their only child, Margaret, was the apple of her father's eye. He strongly backed her musical career (it was when her grand piano crashed through one of the ceilings of the White House that the alarm was raised and the ancient, rotting structure finally given a full repair—job in 1951—2). He supported her desire to become a coloratura soprano. Her first Washington concert, December 5, 1950, got a critical review by Paul Hume in the *Post*. The President dashed off an angry letter, beginning `Mr Hume—I've just read your lousy review of Margaret's concert. I've come to the conclusion that you are "an eight—ulcer man on four—ulcer pay." ' It ended: `Some day I hope to meet you. When that happens you'll need a new nose, a lot of beef steak for black

eyes, and perhaps a supporter below! [Westbrook] Pegler, a guttersnipe, is a gentleman alongside you. I hope you'll accept that statement as a worse insult than a reflection on your ancestry. H.S.T.' Margaret was at first deeply embarrassed, then touched, by her father's loyalty. The letter got into print, and caused tut—tutting, but Truman never regretted it and said all parents of much loved daughters would understand. They did, eventually at any rate. It is one of those incidents which brought home not only Truman's essential Middle Americanism, but in a curiously reassuring way the democratic nature of the US presidency. No one who reads Truman's diaries, and studies his voluminous papers with care, can be in any doubt that he was outspoken, at times vituperative, a volcano of wrath—though a quickly subsiding one—a good hater, a typical hot—blooded American of his time, but also decent, generous, thoughtful, prudent, and cautious when it came to the point, a constitutionalist and a thorough democrat, and a natural leader too.

When Truman decided not to run again in 1952, the Democratic convention picked, on the third ballot, the successful and much liked governor of Illinois, Adlai E. Stevenson (1900—65). He was a toff, like Roosevelt, but in addition an intellectual. Indeed his shining bald dome led the press to create a new term for the species: `egghead.' Stevenson was a decent man and would probably have made an above—average president. But the role history allotted to him was that of the respectable loser, once the Republican Party, not normally a good picker, ditched its ideological standard—bearer, Senator Robert Taft of Ohio (1889—1953), `Mr Republican' as he was known, in favor of General Eisenhower. 'Ike' was bald too, but he was amiable and a smiler—one of the great smilers of all time—and his name lent itself to the most successful button in the whole of US election history: `I Like Ike.' He was elected by an enormous plurality, 33,936,234 to Stevenson's 27,314,999, with an electoral college majority of 441 to 89. And when, in 1956, the Democrats, who had nothing better to offer, decided on a throwaway rerun, Eisenhower triumphed by an even wider margin: 35,590,472 to 26,022,752, the electoral college margin being 457 to 73. Despite growing health problems, including a serious heart attack, Ike might well have been elected again, had not the Twenty—second Amendment, written mainly by Republicans in the light of FDR's four terms, and limiting any one president to two, been adopted in 1951.

Eisenhower was popular because he was seen as a retired war—hero and because his coming marked the nation's return to peace, prosperity, and wellbeing. He was uncontroversial, non—party, unpolitical (or so it seemed), classless, unsectarian, all things to all men. He was certainly unpartisan. After Truman's unexpected victory in 1948, Eisenhower wrote to him that at no point did the political history of the US `record a greater accomplishment than yours, that can be traced so clearly to the stark courage and fighting heart of a single man.' On the other hand, Ike was never as simple as he appeared. `The most devious man I ever came across in politics' was the half—admiring summing—up by Richard Nixon, his vice—president throughout his two terms. Nixon said: `he always applied two, three or four lines of reasoning to a single problem, and he usually preferred the indirect approach.'

As Supreme Allied Commander in Operation Overlord, Eisenhower had been accustomed to organizing vast masses of men and material in conditions of great stress. Running the US federal government held no terrors for him. He knew how to delegate generously and he knew also how to maintain systems of control. Thus he picked as his secretary of state the experienced and knowledgeable international lawyer, John

Foster Dulles (1888—1959) and gave the impression that Dulles was very much in charge of foreign policy, an impression Dulles did all his power to confirm. Dulles was an ideologist of a kind, investing his conduct of international relations with a moral dimension, presenting conflict with the Soviet Union and China in terms of absolute rights and wrongs, and `containment,' which he had reluctantly substituted for rollback,' as a righteous crusade against atheistical Marxism. He said openly to the American people that keeping the peace in a nuclear—armed world was a dangerous business: `The ability to get to the verge [of war] without getting into the war is the necessary art ... We walked to the brink and we looked it in the face.' This frankness, which led to Dulles' critics coining the term `brinkmanship' and accusing him of practicing it as a kind of diplomatic `Russian roulette,' led the unsophisticated to think Dulles was a dangerous man. But the record shows both that he was inherently cautious on all points that mattered, and that he was closely supervised by the President, who insisted that Dulles report to him fully by phone every day even when he was on foreign assignment.

Indeed, it is a curious fact that, as part of his attempt to reassure the American people that all was well, Ike deliberately gave the impression it he was (to use a later term) `laid back.' He allowed it to be thought it he was a kind of constitutional monarch, who delegated decisions his colleagues and indeed to Congress, and who was anxious to spend the maximum amount of time playing golf. Many fell for his stratagem, including his rival Taft, who sneered, `I really think he should have been a golf pro.' His first biographer claimed that `the unanimous consensus' of `journalists and academics, pundits and prophets, the national community of intellectuals and critics' had been that Eisenhower had `elected to leave his nation fly on automatic pilot.' He was seen as well meaning but intellectually ignorant, inarticulate, often weak, and always lazy. The daily digest of his activities and appointments provided by his gravelly voiced press secretary, Jim Haggerty, suggested a light workload.

However, in the late 1970s, the opening up of the secret files kept by his personal secretary, Ann Whitman, phone logs, diaries, and other intimate documents revealed that Eisenhower worked very much harder than anyone, including close colleagues, had supposed. A typical day started at 7.30, by which time he had breakfasted and seen the *New York Times*, *Herald Tribune*, and *Christian Science Monitor,* and it finished close to midnight, though he often worked afterwards. Many of his appointments, particularly those connected with party politics, defense, and foreign policy, were deliberately excluded from the lists put out by Haggerty. Long and vital meetings with the State and Defense Secretaries, the head of the CIA, and other senior figures took place in secret and were unrecorded, before the formal sessions of the National Security Council. The running of defense and foreign policy, far from being bureaucratic and inflexible, as his critics contended, in fact took place in accordance with highly efficient staff principles, which Eisenhower had perfected during his long military career, and which included the military art of deception. These procedures contrastly strongly with the romantic anarchy of the Kennedy regime which followed.

Eisenhower was in charge throughout. He practiced pseudo—delegation. Thus most people thought he left domestic matters largely to his chief of staff, the former governor of New Hampshire, Sherman Adams. Adams himself seems to have shared this illusion. He said that Ike was the last major figure who actively disliked and avoided using the phone. But the logs show he made multitudes of calls about which Adams knew nothing. On foreign policy, he used sources of advice and information about which, equally, Dulles was unaware. He used the industrious Dulles as a superior servant; and Dulles complained that, though he often worked late into the night with the President at the White House, he had `never been asked to a family

dinner.' The notion that Adams and Dulles were prima donnas was deliberately promoted by Eisenhower, since they could be blamed when mistakes were uncovered, thus protecting the office of the presidency.

George Kennan came closer to the truth when he wrote that on foreign affairs Eisenhower was `a man of keen political intelligence and penetration ... When he spoke of such matters seriously and in a protected official circle, insights of a high order flashed out time after time through the curious military gobbledygook in which he was accustomed to expressing and concealing his thoughts.' At public press conferences Eisenhower used his gobbledygook to avoid giving answers which plain English could not conceal, and often pleaded ignorance for the same reason. He was Machiavellian enough to pretend to misunderstand his own translator when dealing with persistent foreigners. Transcripts of his secret conferences show the lucidity and power of his thoughts. His editing of drafts by speechwriters and of statements by Dulles reveal an excellent command of English which he could exercise when he chose. Churchill was one of the few men who appreciated him at his worth, and it could be said that they were the two greatest statesmen of the mid—20th century.

Eisenhower concealed his gifts and activities because he thought it essential that the masterful leadership which he recognized both America and the world needed should be exercised by stealth. He had three guiding principles. The first was to avoid war, which he had seen at close quarters and hated. Of course, if Russia was bent on destroying the West it had to be resisted and America must be strong enough to do the job. But the occasions of unnecessary war (as he judged Korea) must be avoided by clarity, firmness, caution, and wisdom. He ended the Korean conflict. He avoided war with China. He stamped out the Suez war in 1956, although it involved offending his best ally, Britain, and ending the political career of an old friend, Sir Anthony Eden. He skillfully averted another Middle Eastern war in 1958, by timely action. In Indochina in 1955—6, when the French, who had made a mess of things, refused any longer to carry the burden of resisting Communism, Eisenhower agreed to shoulder it, but he was quite clear that America should not get into a war there. `I cannot conceive of a greater tragedy for America,' he remarked presciently of Vietnam, `than to get heavily involved now in an all—out war in any of these regions.' Again: `There is going to be no involvement ... unless it is as a result of the constitutional process that is placed upon Congress to declare it.' Congressional authorization and Allied support—those were the conditions he laid down for American military involvement anywhere, and they were reflected in the CENTO and SEATO systems of alliance he added to NATO. These covered the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

Paradoxically, Eisenhower was strongly opposed to generals participating in politics. The 1953 Chicago convention had been so crowded with generals, mainly supporters of Taft or MacArthur, that Eisenhower, in disgust, ordered his chief aide, Colonel Bob Schultz, and his doctor, General Howard Snyder, to leave town. He thought there were too many military men in and around the CIA, and in 1954 he appointed a wily old diplomat, David Bruce, to head a civilian Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities. He employed other means to keep the military establishment under his authority. He was the only President who knew exactly how to handle the CIA. He presided skillfully over its operation in Iran, for the removal of the antiWest Moussadeq, and in Guatemala, for the overthrow of an unpopular leftist regime, without any damage to his authority. The 1958 CIA coup in Indonesia failed because, for once, the work was delegated to Dulles. It is hard to believe that Eisenhower would have permitted the 1961 Bay of Pigs operation to proceed in the form it took.

One of the reasons Eisenhower hated war was because he did not believe that `limited war' was a viable concept. In war, as he understood it, the object was to destroy your enemy's power as quickly as possible with all the means at your disposal. That was his second guiding principle and it explains why he wound up Korea, to him a 'nonsense,' as quickly as he could, and why he deplored Eden's absurd Suez expedition in 1956, in which the Prime Minister personally approved the weights of bombs to be dropped on Egyptian targets. If Eisenhower had fought the Vietnam War, he would have fought it to a finish with all the power of the American armed forces. To him, Lyndon Johnson's political war, with the White House in effect deciding the timing and level of operations, would have seemed a certain formula for failure. Eisenhower was always clear, from his long experience, about how the business of war, when unavoidable, should be conducted. The President and Congress must decide. The President, as chief magistrate and commander—in—chief, should then state the objects to be achieved clearly, and issue precise and unambiguous orders to the armed forces. Their commanders should then state, equally clearly, the resources they required to carry out the orders and, having received them, do precisely that without political interference. Clear distinctions between the roles of the constitutional power of the Congress and presidency and the executive power of the military were always present in Eisenhower's mind—and it was their absence in the decade which followed which led to disaster.

It was Eisenhower's secret fear, in the tense atmosphere generated by the Cold War, that the government would fall into the grip of a combination of bellicose senators, over—eager brasshats, and greedy arms—suppliers. In his farewell address, broadcast on January 17, 1961, he coined or popularized a new phrase: `In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military—industrial complex.' His use of this term has often been misunderstood. Eisenhower was not condemning militarism so much as making an important economic point in a military context. Historians can trace the rise of huge executive power in the United States, accompanied by prodigious spending, through the pre—World War One years of the Wilson administration, the vast expansion of federal and military power 1917—18, the revival of large—scale federal industrial projects during the New Deal, their expansion during World War Two on a gigantic and unprecedented scale, and the way in which the onset of the Cold War made a large—scale, free—spending federal government, linked to an enormous arms industry, and voracious armed forces, a permanent feature of the American system. Eisenhower's third principle, reflected in his private diaries and papers, was that the security of freedom throughout the world depended ultimately on the health and strength of the US economy. Given time, the strength of that economy would duplicate itself in western Europe and Japan—he could see it happening—thus spreading the burden. But the US economy itself could be destroyed by intemperate spending by a greedy, over—large state, generating profligacy and inflation. He said of the military: `They don't know much about fighting inflation. This country could choke itself to death piling up military expenditures just as surely as it can defeat itself by not spending enough for protection.' Or again: `There is no defense for any country which busts its own economy.'

For this reason Eisenhower was equally opposed to reckless spending in the domestic field. He was not opposed to deficit finance as a temporary device to fight recession. In 1958, to overcome such a dip, he ran up a $9.4 billion deficit, the largest so far for the US government in peacetime. But that was an emergency. Normally he ran balanced budgets. What he was most opposed to was a massive, permanent increase in federal commitments. He put holding down inflation before social security because he held that price stability was ultimately the only reliable form of

social security. He loathed the idea of a welfare state. He was in fact deeply conservative. He admitted in 1956: ‘Taft was really more liberal than me in domestic matters.’" His nightmare was a combination of excessive defense spending and a runaway welfare machine—a destructive conjunction that became reality in the late 1960s. While he was still in charge, federal spending as a percentage of GNP, and with it inflation, was held to a manageable figure, despite all the pressures. It was a notable achievement and explains why the Eisenhower decade was the most prosperous of modern times in America, and felt to be such, as if the lost Arcadia of the 1920s was being rediscovered. By the end of the 1960s this prosperity was radiating widely all over the world, as the pump—priming by US economic aid took effect. The world was more secure and stable too. In 1950—2, the risk of a major war was acute. By the end of the decade a certain stability had been reached, lines drawn, rules worked out, alliances and commitments settled across the globe. Perhaps only Eisenhower himself knew which of those commitments were real, but the Soviets and Chinese had learned that it was safest to assume that they all were. Thus the containment policy had been successfully applied. Militant Marxism—Leninism, which had expanded rapidly in the 1940s in both Europe and Asia, found its impetuous march slowed to a crawl or even halted entirely. These were tremendous achievements.

Eisenhower’s skill and deviousness allowed the country to survive, without too much damage, one of its periodical outbreaks of hysteria, which in this case goes under the heading of `McCarthyism.’ It had long been known that Communist agents had penetrated government at various levels in the 1930s and 1940s. In theory, the United States was protected against subversion by the McCormack Act (1938), which obliged foreign agents to register, and by the Hatch Act (1939) and the Smith Act (1940), under which members of organizations which advocated the overthrow of the US government by force or violence could be prosecuted. But these did not work against covert Communist sympathizers who got into government during the New Deal or the war. In his memoirs, George Kennan admits that `the penetration of the American governmental services by members or agents (conscious or otherwise) of the American Communist Party’ was `not a figment of the imagination’ but `really existed and assumed proportions which, while never overwhelming, were also not trivial.’ He said that those who served in Moscow or the Russian division of the State Department were `very much aware’ of the danger. The Roosevelt administration, according to Kennan and others, was remiss in failing to heed warnings about the extent of Communist activity, `which fell too often upon deaf or incredulous ears.’ The Truman administration was more vigilant. In November 1946 Truman appointed a Temporary Commission of Employee Loyalty and the following March he acted on its recommendations with Executive Order 9835, which authorized inquiries into political beliefs and associations of all federal employees.

A number of prosecutions took place. Some proved very difficult. Alger Hiss, a senior State Department official, accused in 1948 by a self—confessed Communist agent, Whittaker Chambers, of having sent classified documents to Moscow in the 1930s, was indicted for espionage but discharged after a jury failed to reach a verdict on July 8, 1949. He was later convicted of perjury, January 21, 1950, and sentenced to five years in prison, but his guilt on the main charges was never finally established until the mid—1990s. On the other hand, those responsible for betraying atomic secrets to Russia, which allowed Stalin to make his first A—bombs much more quickly than had been expected, were brought to book. Harry Gold was convicted on December 9, 1950, and he and David and Ruth Greenglass confessed their guilt and implicated Julius and Ethel Rosenberg and Morton Sobell, all of whom had been associated with

the Communist Party. On March 29, 1951 the three were found guilty by a jury, and all were sentenced, the Rosenbergs, the only ones of the accused to refuse to cooperate, being sentenced to death, and executed June 19, 1953 at Sing Sing prison.

Truman's precautions against future espionage seem to have been effective, on the whole, in eliminating those who spied for ideological reasons, as opposed to the merely mercenary. But, by the time they had been set up, Congress had alerted itself to the danger of subversion which (it was claimed) had led first to the `loss' of eastern Europe, then to the `loss' of China. A fortnight after Hiss's conviction, the junior Senator for Wisconsin, Joseph R. McCarthy, made a Lincoln Day speech in Wheeling, West Virginia, in which he caused a sensation by waving a piece of paper naming `all the men in the State Department' who were `active members of the Communist Party and members of a spy ring.' He added: `I have here in my hand a list of 205—a list of names which were made known to the Secretary of State [Dean Acheson] ... and who nevertheless are still working and shaping policy in the State Department.'

There had been Congressional attempts to remove Communists before, notably by the House Committee on Un—American Activities, but McCarthy's speech began the active phase of the anti—Red witchhunt. By the time it took place, most of the real Communists in public service had been detected, dismissed, indicted, convicted, or imprisoned. There was no `list of 205 names.' The figure 205 was the result of faulty arithmetic. It arose because James Byrnes, when secretary of state, had written to Congressman Adolph Sabath that 285 alleged security risks had been identified in the State Department and, after investigation, seventy—nine had been fired. After subtraction, the remainder, 206, mistakenly became the figure of 205 McCarthy had used. McCarthy also produced another figure, fifty—seven. This came from a report by Robert E. Lee, chief of staff of the House Appropriations Committee, complaining that fifty—seven State Department employees out of an original list of 108 suspects he had reported to the Department were still on its payroll in March 1948. But, of these fifty—seven, thirty—five had already then been cleared by the FBI and clearance was later given to others. McCarthy never possessed any actual names, and the only ones he used were those already published in the extremist counter—subversion literature such as Elizabeth Dilling's *Red Network*, Richard Whitney's *Reds in America*, Blair Coan's *Red Web*, and Nesta Webster's *World Revolution*. McCarthy was never a serious investigator of subversion but a politician trying to draw attention to himself. He was first amazed, then unbalanced, and finally destroyed by his success. There is no evidence he ever identified any subversive not already known to the authorities and the only consequence of his activities was to cause trouble and distress for a lot of innocent people and discredit the activities of those genuinely concerned to make America safe.

The response of President Truman and the Democrats was to meet McCarthy head—on. The Senate Democrats appointed a committee under Senator Millard Tidings of Maryland to investigate McCarthy's charges, and the hearings of the Tidings Committee effectively exposed as worthless all specific charges against individuals McCarthy was persuaded to name. Truman told the press that McCarthy was `the Kremlin's greatest asset in America,' which was true. Truman also commissioned a study of `hysteria and witchhunting' in American history, which concluded there was a permanent undercurrent of `hate and intolerance' in America which periodically produced outbreaks such as McCarthyism. This in turn created an academic sub—branch of sociology, leading to a 1954 Columbia University seminar on McCarthyism, during which the historian Richard Hofstadter, using Theodor Adorno's 1950 tract *The Authoritarian Personality*, explained the phenomenon as a projection onto society of the groundless fears of 'pseudo—conservatives.' This was later expressed in a famous essay by Hofstadter, `The

Paranoid Style in American Politics' (1964), which proved hugely influential and became the official liberal explanation of McCarthyism, thus generating even more confusion than the Senator's original accusations.

In the meantime, McCarthy accelerated a process of `blacklisting' which had already begun before his intervention. As far back as November 1947 a meeting of Hollywood producers had drawn up a blacklist of names of Communists, including one producer, one director, and eight writers. Between 1951 and 1954 the House UnAmerican Activities Committee named 324 Hollywood personalities, who were also blacklisted. There was likewise a broadcast—industry blacklist, dat ing from April 1947 and constantly added to. Local governments began investigating schools and universities and imposing loyalty oaths as a condition of employment. In 1948 the University of Washington had fired three professors for refusing to answer questions or for admitting they were Communists, and, after McCarthy began the hue and cry, about a hundred professors were fired for similar reasons between 1952 and 1954. Blacklisting was extended and enforced by a variety of groups including the Wage Earners Committee, which specialized in movies, the American Legion, the Catholic War Veterans, a special body called AWARE, created by Godfrey Schmidt, the lawyer of Cardinal Francis Spellman of New York, and an ABC program *Red Channels*.

After the Republicans captured control of the Senate in the November 1952 elections, McCarthy had himself made chairman of the hitherto obscure Investigation Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Government Operations, and turned it into a forum for his claims, hiring a clever and unscrupulous twenty—five—year—old lawyer, Roy M. Cohn, as his chief counsel. His campaign had long since lost touch with reality. On June 14, 1951 he had subjected the Senate to a three—hour harangue in which he `named' General Marshall as `the grim and solitary man' who was at the heart of `a conspiracy on a scale so immense as to dwarf any previous such venture in the history of man.' He published these charges in a book, *America's Retreat from Victory; the Story of George Catlett Marshall*, and when he got his own subcommittee and staff he turned on the Republicans, attacking Eisenhower for nominating the Harvard president James B. Conant as high commissioner in Germany, and Charles Bohlen as ambassador in Moscow. Eisenhower's response was characteristically devious. He thought that Truman's direct rebuttals of McCarthy's charges were mistaken and that if he himself entered into an argument he would merely provide the Senator with more anxiously sought publicity. He declared privately: `I just will not—I refuse—to get into the gutter with that guy.' He found it hard not to come to the rescue of his old mentor, Marshall, but he strongly believed that, if he ignored and belittled McCarthy, the Senator would eventually destroy himself.

When Eisenhower, and the National Security Council, blocked an attempt by McCarthy to investigate the CIA, the Senator turned instead on the US Army. That proved his undoing, as the President suspected it would, because in the process of the controversy McCarthy's accusations created, it emerged that Roy Cohn had put pressure on the army to secure favors for his boyfriend, a conscript called David Schine, in defiance of `good order and military discipline.' This was the kind of scandal the ordinary public could understand, and the suspicions of homosexuality spread to include McCarthy himself, whose relationship to Cohn, and indeed Schine, appeared dubious. These opportunities were skillfully exploited during public hearings by the army counsel, a foxy old Boston lawyer called Joseph N. Welch. McCarthy the bully and the accuser found himself the bullied and the accused, and in his pain he increased his already considerable intake of alcohol (the ability to `belt a fifth [of a gallon] of bourbon' was a pledge of virility in his circle). His allies in the media, the House, and the Senate deserted him one by

one and on December 2, 1954 the Senate voted 67 to 22 to censure him. He died of alcohol—related illness before the end of his term, on May 2, 1957, a burned—out case and almost forgotten, though McCarthyism lingered on as a term of abuse for conservative inquiries into any form of liberal ill—doing, however well substantiated.

The significant fact about McCarthyism, seen in retrospect, was that it was the last occasion, in the 20th century, when the hysterical pressure on the American people to conform came from the right of the political spectrum, and when the witchhunt was organized by conservative elements. Thereafter the hunters became the hunted. It was the liberals and the progressives who, over the next four decades, were to direct such inquisitions as Watergate and Irangate. The Eisenhower decade was the last of the century in which the traditional elements in American society held the cultural upper hand. Eisenhower's America was still recognizably derived from the republic of the Founding Fathers. There were still thousands of small towns in the United States where the world of Norman Rockwell was intact and unselfconsciously confident in itself and its values. Patriotism was esteemed. The flag was saluted. The melting—pot was still at work, turning out unhyphenated Americans. Indeed the `American Way of Life' was a term of praise, not abuse. Upward mobility was the aim. Business success was applauded and identified with the nation's interests. When Eisenhower appointed Charles ('Engine Charlie') Wilson, who was head of General Motors, as Defense Secretary, and he testified at his nomination hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee, January 15, 1953, he told them, without apology: `For years I thought what was good for our country was good for General Motors, and vice—versa. The difference does not exist. Our company is too big. It goes with the welfare of the country.' No senator dissented. The nomination was unanimously approved.

There was, to be sure, plenty of criticism, especially from the new
breed of pop—sociologists who flourished at this time. The most influential was C. Wright Mills (1916—62), who seized on the tendency of American society to alienate as well as to embrace people, to exclude as much as to include. He was obsessed by the notion of the powerful few and the powerless multitude. He had been an unsuccessful car salesman, a bad thing to be in America, where Willy Loman, the tragic antihero of Arthur Miller's 1950 hit, *Death of a Salesman*, was a figure of pathos. Mills insisted that America was becoming `a great salesroom, an enormous file, an incorporated brain, and a new universe of management and manipulation.' He pressed this charge in a remarkable trilogy of books, analyzing the various layers of America's giant anonymous structure: *New Men of Power* (1948) on labor and its leaders, *White Collar* (1951) on the new middle class of middle management, and *The Power Elite* (1956), which described the `higher circles' of corporate, military, and political authority. He wrote of the `postmodern' society in which democratic `publics' had been replaced by manipulated 'masses.' The theme was echoed and enlarged by David Reisman and Nathan Glazer in *The Lonely Crowd: A Study o f the Changing American Character* (1950), which claimed that Americans were losing their individualism, their 'Inner—direction,' and were becoming 'outer—directed,' forced into conformity by pressure from their `peer groups.' Spreading suburbia and the flight from the inner cities, a phenomenon of the decade, was blamed for this increasing conformity. William H. Whyte in *The Organization Man* (1956) blamed suburban America for stressing `getting along' or `belonging' at the expense of the personal, entrepreneurial drives that had made the country remarkable.

However, the most influential writers of the period were not the sociological critics but the dispensers of uplift. This was an old American tradition, with its good and its bad sides, going back at least to Jonathan Edwards, and dispensed in secular form by Emerson. Uplift writing

nurtured resolution and self—reliance; it also bred complacency. The latest crop had first sprouted in the Depression, when it was much needed, and overflowed in the Eisenhower era. Dale Carnegie (1888—1955) had started as a speech—trainer, a good entry into the upward—mobility trade, and his *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (1936) was just what millions of Americans felt they needed. His later *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living* (1948) was an updated model for an age of full employment. Another tireless worker in the uplift vineyard was Norman Vincent Peale (1889—1969), an Ohio Methodist who later embraced the Dutch Reformed Church. He started with *You Can Win* (1938), broadened his appeal to include all American religious groups with *A Guide to Confident Living* (1948), and hit the commercial jackpot in 1952 with *The Power of Positive Thinking*, which had sold 3 million copies in hardback by 1974. Its chapter heads, `I Don't Believe in Defeat,' `Expect the Best and Get It,' `How to Get People to Like You,' gave the characteristically American message that there was no problem, personal as well as public, without a solution. There were scores of other quasi—religious preachers reassuring the public along the same lines.

In addition to mere uplift, there was genuine religion in countless varieties, sprouting and flourishing in these years. In 1944, a historian called W. W. Sweet had mistakenly preached a funeral sermon, *Revivalism in America; its Origin, Growth and Decline*. At the very time he was writing, Billy Graham (b. 1918), a Southern Baptist minister ordained in 1939, was gearing up for his successful effort to `revive revivalism,' beginning with an eight—week tent meeting of 350,000 people in, of all unlikely places, Los Angeles in 1949. Graham concentrated on conservatives within the larger Protestant denominations, or in churches opposed to the ecumenical movement, and he proved remarkably successful and persistent, being still a major figure in evangelical revivalism in the second half of the 1990s. His stress was not on sinfulness so much as opportunity, renewal, and peace of mind, epitomized in his *Peace with God* (1953). This echoed the themes of the conservative Catholic revivalist Monsignor Fulton Sheen (1895—1975), whose *Peace of Soul* (1949) led to a popular TV show, *Life is Worth Living*, with an audience of 30 million, and brought him in a fan—nail of 8,000 to 10,000 letters a day. Successful evangelism was evidence of a much deeper and wider religious revival, reflected in statistics of church affiliation. In 1910, 43 percent of Americans were attached to particular churches. This figure was the same in the 1920s. The Depression, far from alienating ordinary Americans, led to a rise in church attendance, which by 1940 was 49 percent. By 1950 the figure was 55 percent and in 1960 it had risen to 69 percent, probably the highest in America's entire history (it had dropped to 62.4 by 1970). Vast numbers of new churches were built or old ones enlarged to accommodate the expanded congregations: in 1960 alone over $1 billion was spent on church—building. The government took note and gave its sanction, wherever possible, to religious activity. In 1954 the phrase `under God,' as used by Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address, was added to the national Pledge of Allegiance, sworn by all those gaining citizenship, and `In God We Trust' was adopted as the country's official motto.

Eisenhower presided benignly over what was termed `Piety on the Potomac', a generalized form of the Christian religion very much in the American tradition, with no stress on dogma but insistence on moral propriety and good works. He announced in 1954: `Our government makes no sense unless it is founded on a deeply felt religious faith—and I don't care what it is.' By this he did not mean, of course, that he was indifferent to the articles of faith, far from it, but that he believed sincere faith was conducive to moral conformity, and that religion was the best, cheapest, and least oppressive form of social control. He had made his own personal sacrifice to the demands of conformity. While on active service abroad, 1942—5, he had fallen in love with

his Anglo Irish driver, Kay Summersby, and in June 1945, after Germany was beaten, had even considered divorce and remarriage. But this proposal (according to Truman) had been vetoed by a blistering letter from his military superior, General Marshall, who threatened to `bust him out of the army' unless he gave up the idea.

But, if the United States was still a conformist and traditional society in the 1950s, the portents of change were present too. In 1948 an Indiana University entomologist, Dr Alfred Kinsey, brought out an 804—page volume, based on 18,000 interviews over many years, called *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*. He followed it in 1954 with *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, which sold 250,000 copies. They revealed that 68—90 percent of American males, and almost 50 percent of females, engaged in premarital sexual intercourse, that 92 percent of males and 62 percent of females had masturbated, and that 37 percent of males and 13 percent of females had experienced homosexual intercourse. The findings also suggested that 50 percent of men and 26 percent of women had committed adultery before the age of forty. Kinsey's findings caused surprise and in some cases rage but they confirmed much other evidence that, even in the 1950s, the Norman Rockwell images no longer told the full story. Hollywood was still trying to hold the lines laid down by the old Hays Code, but it was cracking. The adultery theme had been tackled, to public approval, in *From Here to Eternity* (1953). In 1956 came *Baby Doll*, described by *Time* as `just possibly the dirtiest American—made motion—picture that has ever been legally permitted.' Hollywood dealt with interracial sex in *Island in the Sun* (1957), homosexuality in *Compulsion* (1958), and abortion in *Blue Denim* (1959). *Playboy* (December 1953) was the herald of the soft—porn magazines, the lubricious *Peyton Place* was the 6million—copy bestseller of 1956—8, *Lolita* introduced the sexual `nymphet' in 1958, and in 1959 *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was at last published without prosecution. Movies of these bestselling fictions quickly followed.

Television, anxious at this stage to establish itself as an all—American institution, was more censorious, and modeled itself on US radio. There were 1,200 US radio stations in 1949 and only 28 TV stations, transmitted to the 172,000 (1948) families which owned sets. This figure jumped to 15.3 million in 1952 and 32 million in 1955. By 1960 some go percent of households had at least one TV set (and by 1970 over 38 percent had color TV). As the TV habit spread and took deep root, and as the medium made itself indispensable to all the purveyors of mass—consumption goods and services, those who ran the networks and the stations began to flex their cultural muscles and contemplate a society in which all standard measurements of behavior would be up for redefinition, and moral relativism, based on ratings, would rule. Thus the way to the 1960s was prepared, and what began as a sexual revolution was to bring about revolutions in many other areas too.

PART EIGHT

‘We Will Pay Any Price, Bear Any Burden’

Problem—Solving, Problem—Creating America, 1960 —1997

In 1960 President Eisenhower was the oldest man ever to occupy the White House, and the universal cry was for youth. The Sixties were one of those meretricious decades where novelty was considered all—important, and youth peculiarly blessed. Normally circumspect men and women, who had once made a virtue of prudence, and were to resume responsible behavior in due course, did foolish things in those years. Such waves of folly recur periodically in history. The wise historian does not seek too assiduously to explain them. He merely notes that they occur, and have baleful consequences. Thus it was with the 1960s.' The two candidates for the presidential election both had youth on their side. Eisenhower's Vice—President, Richard Nixon (1913—94) was forty—seven. He was very experienced for his age, having sat in the House from 1947, and the Senate (for California) from 1950, following a distinguished wartime career in the US Navy. During his eight years as vice—president he had been a prominent figure in the Senate, one of Eisenhower's most often—consulted colleagues, and had traveled all over the world as a US spokesman and representative. He had been tested, and emerged with credit. He had been nearly murdered by anti—American radicals in Caracas in 1958 and stood up successfully to Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet dictator, in a famous public debate in Moscow in 1959. In 1960 the Republicans nominated him for president on the first ballot, virtually without opposition (the actual figure was 1321 to 10) as the obvious man to lead the nation `in the spirit of Ike.' His running mate, UN ambassador and former Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, was an Eastern establishment man of similar wide experience. The two men constituted an outstanding ticket.

The Democratic candidate, John Fitzgerald Kennedy (1917—63), was also young (forty—three) and experienced. Like Nixon, he had had a successful wartime career in the navy, had served in the House as Congressman from Massachusetts from 1947, and then as senator from 1953. Both men had been fierce anti—Communists in the postwar years. Nixon had played an important part in exposing and convicting Alger Hiss, and had been publicly praised by Kennedy for doing so. It is illuminating that, just before the two men were nominated, Nixon ran into Kennedy's father, FDR's old campaign contributor Joseph P. ('Poppa Joe') Kennedy, outside the Colony Restaurant in New York. Kennedy Sr said: `I just want you to know how much I admire you for what you've done in the Hiss case and in all the [anti—] Communist activity of yours. If Jack doesn't get it, I'll be for you.' But, though the two men had much in common, the differences were enormous and important. And, still more important—and significant—was the way those differences were perceived, especially by the East Coast media.

We come now to an important structural change in America. America had always been, from the earliest time, a democratic society, in that men (and indeed women) paid little attention to formal rank, even where it existed. Every man felt he had the right to shake hands with every other man, even the President (Washington was the first and last President to deny that right, by bowing). But this democratic spirit was balanced by the tribute of respect to those who, for one reason or another—experience, learning, position, wealth, office, or personality—had earned the title of `boss.' The balance struck between egalitarianism and deference was one of the most remarkable characteristics of America, and one of its great strengths. The Sixties brought a change. In the space of a decade, the word `boss' passed almost out of the language, certainly out of universal usage. Deference itself deferred to a new spirit of hostility to authority. It became the fashion to challenge long—established hierarchies, to revolt against them or ignore them. Nowhere was this spirit more manifest than in the media (as it is now convenient to speak of the press, radio, and TV). Television had a powerful impact on the way opinion was formed, not only in the country, but within itself. The growth of the TV personality meant that many of those

who appeared in front of the cameras, though originally of little account in the official hierarchy of the state, became famous to millions, valuable commodities, and soon earned more than their superiors up the hierarchy and eventually (in some cases) as much as station—owners. And in time they, rather than the management, let alone the stockholders, began to set the tone of comment and the thrust of opinion.

An early sign of the change was the way in which Edward R. Murrow, presenter of the *See It Now* public affairs program on CBS TV, emerged as a leading American opinion—former. His March 9, 1954 documentary on McCarthy, which played a notable part in breaking the Senator, was entirely conceived by Murrow himself and his producer. Management, board, and owners of CBS had little or nothing to do with it. The gradual but cumulatively almost complete transfer of opinion—forming power from the owners and commercial managers of TV stations to the program—makers and presenters was one of the great new facts of life, unheard of before the 1950s, axiomatic by the end of the 1960s. And it was gradually paralleled by a similar shift in the newspaper world, especially on the great dailies and magazines of the East Coast, where political power, with few exceptions, passed from proprietors and major stockholders to editors and writers. Owners like Hearst and McCormick (of the *Chicago Tribune*), Pulitzer and Henry Luce (of Time—Life), who had once decided the political line of their publications in considerable detail, moved out of the picture and their places were taken by the working journalists. Since the latter tended to be overwhelmingly liberal in their views, this was not just a political but a cultural change of considerable importance. Indeed it is likely that nothing did more to cut America loose from its traditional moorings.

The change could be seen in 1960, in the way the East Coast media (the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, *Time* and *Newsweek*), handled the contest between Nixon and Kennedy. By all historical standards, Nixon should have been an American media hero. He was a natural candidate for laurels in the grand old tradition of self—help, of pulling yourself up by your own bootstraps. He came from nowhere. His family background was respectable but obscure. He worked his way through an unfashionable college. He had no money except what he earned by his own efforts. He had, to begin with, no influential friends or connections. His life was dominated by a passionate desire to serve in public office, sometimes masquerading as brutal ambition, and by his patriotism and love of country, which knew no bounds. He was an autodidact and voracious reader, always trying to better himself, intellectually as well as professionally. He combined this earnest cultural endeavor with solid campaigning and administrative skills, which brought him early and continuing success, and with a modest private life which was morally impeccable. He was twice elected vice—president and twice president, on the second occasion (1972) by the largest plurality in American history, 47,169,911 to 29,170,382, and by 520 college votes to 17, his opponent, George McGovern, being able to carry only Massachusetts. These were extraordinary achievements in a man from nowhere, in the best American democratic—egalitarian style—the Benjamin Franklin tradition. Yet, from start to finish, the media, especially the `quality' press, distrusted him, consistently denigrated him, and sought to destroy him, indeed in a sense did destroy him. At every
crisis in his career—except the last—he had to appeal above the heads of the media to the great mass of the ordinary American people, the `silent majority' as he called them.

The origin of the East Coast media hostility to Nixon lay in his 1950 Senate defeat of Helen Gahagan Douglas (1900—80), a left—wing Congresswoman consistently portrayed by the media as a political virgin and martyr, whom Nixon crucified on the cross of antiCommunism. A former singer, married to the movie actor Melvyn Douglas, she was an outstanding example of

raucous Hollywood chutzpah, and all the mud thrown at her came from within her own party. During the campaign, Democratic Congressman John F. Kennedy, no less, handed Nixon an envelope from his father containing $1,000, saying he hoped it would help `to turn the Senate's loss into Hollywood's gain." Indeed Douglas was beaten primarily by disgusted Democrats switching to Nixon. The Hiss case did Nixon even more damage with the media, which, against all the evidence, tried to turn this undoubted Soviet agent and perjurer into an American Dreyfus in order to portray Nixon as a McCarthyite witchhunter.' Only after Nixon's death was Hiss's guilt finally established beyond argument by material from Soviet sources.

By contrast, the media did everything in its power to build up and sustain the beatific myth of John F. Kennedy, throughout his life and long after his death, until it finally collapsed in ruins under the weight of incontrovertible evidence. The media protected him, suppressed what it knew to be the truth about him, and if necessary lied about him, on a scale which it had never done even for Franklin Roosevelt. And this was all the more surprising because Kennedy had most of the characteristics of an American anti—hero. Kennedy was third—generation Boston—Irish upward mobility personified. Both his grandfathers were unscrupulous ward—heeling Boston politicians who well understood what became the running theme of the Kennedy family—how to turn money into political power—though they made their piles in different ways, one through insurance, the other in the liquor trade. It was Kennedy's father, however, Joseph P. Kennedy (1888—1969), who saw that to get national power, if not for himself, then for his sons, it was necessary to amass an enormous fortune. That meant breaking out of the narrow Boston orbit and moving to New York. It also meant grabbing opportunities, including criminal ones, as they arose. So Joe Kennedy created one of the biggest cash piles of the century through banking (or perhaps one should call it money—lending, which is closer to the truth), shipbuilding, Hollywood, stock—jobbing, and bootleg liquor, among many other activities. He set up trust funds of $10 million apiece for his children and squirreled away vast sums for a variety of other purposes, chiefly for buying people, whether politicians, newspaper proprietors, or, indeed, cardinals. His range of contacts and collaborators was enormous and included the mob leader Frank Costello and Doc Stacher, lieutenant of another leading *mafioso*, Meyer Lansky. Joe was used by (and used) FDR, bought an ambassadorship from him, then set about the task of making his eldest son president.

When Joe Jr was killed in the war, Jack became crown prince and president—designate. He inherited his father's values in many respects, though they jostled in uneasy counterpoint with his mother's brand of traditional Catholicism. Jack never had his father's insatiable relish for money, power, and corruption. Most of his life he simply did old Joe's bidding. As he put it, ruefully: `I guess Dad has decided he's going to be the ventriloquist, so that leaves me the role of dummy.' In one important respect, Jack rejected the family tradition. Money did not interest him and he never troubled to learn anything about it. It was not that he was extravagant. Quite the contrary, he was mean.

But, if he was not interested in making money, in most other respects he happily accepted the family philosophy, especially its central tenet: that the laws of God and the republic, admirable in themselves, did not apply to Kennedys, at any rate male ones. Like his father, he dealt with gangsters, when he felt so inclined. From the start he was taught by his father that bluff, freely laced with money—or outright mendacity if need be—could remove all difficulties. The lies centered on certain areas. One was Jack's health. Old Joe had learned many tricks in concealing the true state of his retarded daughter, Rosemary, buried alive in a home." He used them to gloss over the seriousness of Jack's back problems, and his functional disorder, eventually diagnosed

as Addison's Disease. Strictly speaking, Jack was never fit to hold any important public office, and the list of lies told about his body by the Kennedy camp over many years is formidable. The backpain Jack suffered seems to have increased after he became president, and his White House physician, Dr Janet Travell, had to give him two or three daily injections of novocaine. Jack eventually found this treatment intolerably painful. But he did not fire Travell, fearing that, though she had hitherto been willing to mislead the media about his health, she might now disclose his true medical history. Instead, he kept her on the payroll but put himself into the hands of a rogue named Dr Max Jacobson, who later lost his medical license and was described by his nurse as `absolutely a quack.' Known to his celebrity clients as `Doctor Feelgood,' because of his willingness to inject amphetamines laced with steroids, animal cells, and other goodies, Jacobson started to shoot powerful drugs into Jack once, twice, or even three times a week. Although he turned down a request to move into the White House, he had succeeded, by the summer of 1961, in making the President heavily dependent on amphetamines.

The other main area of lying centered on Jack's curriculum vitae. In 1940 his thesis was written for him by a number of people, including Arthur Krock of the *New York Times*, and Joe's personal speechwriter, who described it in its original state as `a very sloppy job, mostly magazine and newspaper clippings stuck together.' But, processed, it not only allowed Jack to graduate *cum laude* but also appeared in book form as *Why England Slept*. Old Joe and his men turned it into a 'bestseller,' partly by using influence with publishers such as Henry Luce, partly by buying 30,000—40,000 copies, which were secretly stored at the family compound in Hyannisport. It was the same story with *Profiles in Courage*, which began as a `disorganised, somewhat incoherent melange from secondary sources' and was turned by Theodore Sorensen and a team of academic historians and professional writers into a readable book. By 1958 it had sold nearly 125,000 copies and, after intense lobbying by Joe, Krock, and other Kennedy satraps, it won Jack the Pulitzer prize for biography. Those who suggested the book was ghostwritten were sued for libel or even, at Joe's request, investigated by the FBI.

Old Joe's neatest trick was to turn Jack into a war hero. In view of Jack's health, all Joe's skill at manipulation was needed to get him into the navy; secure him an immediate commission, and advance him in the service, especially since, while a young officer working in naval intelligence, he was detected by the FBI having an affair with a Danish woman suspected of being a Nazi spy. Jack was in charge of a PT boat which was rammed and sunk by a Japanese destroyer. Father Joe's management got him a medal for rescuing a crew member. The death of Joe Jr made the father anxious for Jack's safety. So he was promptly plucked out of the US Navy by the same means he got into it—influence. Maximum use was made of Jack's war career in all his campaigns.

With the peace, Old Joe set about making Kennedy first a congressman, then a senator, then president. This train of events is worth studying because it shows the extent to which money paved the way to political power in mid—20th—century America. The young man acquiesced at first, but gradually his competitive spirit, strong but hitherto devoted to games and sex, was aroused, and he cooperated with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Kennedy's political ascent, however, was based essentially on money and corruption. It is not always clear he was aware of his father's malpractices. Naturally he knew of the dishonesty and lies that made him a war hero and a literary celebrity. But getting him into the House and Senate took enormous sums of money, much of it spent openly but the rest doled out furtively by his father. In Kennedy's first House race, large families were each given $50 in cash `to help out at the polls'. As Tip O'Neill (later Speaker of the House) put it, `They were simply buying votes, a few at a time, and fifty

bucks was a lot of money.'" Outsiders found they could not get a mention, or even buy space, in papers whose owners owed Joe a favor. To get Kennedy into the Senate, Joe diverted one rival into the governorship race by making a large campaign donation, gave another to Adlai Stevenson to buy his endorsement, and loaned the editor of the *Boston Post* half a million to secure his support. Kennedy certainly knew about that one, since he later admitted, `You know, we had to buy that paper or I'd have been licked.'

After the Senate victory, Joe set his sights higher and, under Sorensen's guidance, a new John F. Kennedy personality began to emerge, calculated to appeal to liberals, intellectuals, and `civilized people.' James MacGregor Burns was employed to manufacture a hagiography called *John F. Kennedy: a Political Profile*. Other writers ghosted a mass of articles signed by Kennedy and published in everything from *Look, Life*, and the *Progressive* to the *Georgetown Law Review*. The willingness, then and later, of intellectuals and academics of high repute to participate in the promotion of Kennedy is worth noting. Self—deception can only go so far: some of them must have known they were involved in one of the biggest frauds in American political history. As one of his biographers puts it, `No national figure has ever so consistently and unashamedly used others to manufacture a personal reputation as a great thinker and scholar.'

Did Kennedy, or for that matter his even more competitive—minded younger brother Bobby, much his superior in intelligence, and who now played an increasing role in the campaigns, have any political convictions? Kennedy shared his father's reverence for the power that money brings, and the need to hang onto an unearned fortune made him a fierce anti—Communist. His instincts put him in the same camp as Senator McCarthy. He was on friendly terms with Nixon. Later he became more liberal. But essentially he was a half—ambitious, half—reluctant, dutiful son—and—heir following the masterful demands of his father to get to the top by fair means or foul. As Tip O'Neill put it: 'Looking back on his Congressional campaign, and on his later campaigns for the Senate and then for the Presidency, I'd have to say that [jack] was only nominally a Democrat. He was a Kennedy, which was more than a family affiliation. It quickly developed into an entire political party, with its own people, its own approach and its own strategies.' The man who got it right at the time was the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan. He grasped the important point that electing a Kennedy was not so much giving office to an individual as handing over power to a family business, a clan, almost a milieu, with a set of attitudes about how office was to be acquired and used which at no point coincided with the American ethic. Having paid his first visit after Kennedy's election as President, Macmillan was asked on his return what it was like in Kennedy's Washington. `Oh,' said he, `it's rather like watching the Borgia brothers take over a respectable North Italian city.'

By the time Kennedy was in the race for the Democratic nomination, then the White House, he was—or rather his people were—developing certain themes, especially the stress on youth, glamour (cortisone treatment had given him a chunkier, more handsome appearance), and sophistication, including an apparent intellectual elegance. But he was still pushed forward primarily by money. His father used the full force of his fortune to wreck competition from the popular Minnesota Senator, Hubert Humphrey (1911—78) in the West Virginia primary. (Humphrey, a decent and, on the whole, honest man was the great political fall—guy of these years who, like Henry Clay in the 19th century, never quite got to the top: he always played the game, and he always lost it.) The Kennedy disadvantage was, or was thought to be, his Catholicism, which had damned Al Smith a generation before. Cardinal Richard Cushing of Boston, Old Joe's tame `red hat,' who was a kind of house—chaplain to the Kennedy family,

later admitted that he and Joe had decided which Protestant ministers were to receive `contributions' of $l00 or $500 to play down the religious issue. The money used for outright bribes came partly from the Kennedy coffers and partly from the mafia, following a secret meeting between jack Kennedy and Sam Giancana, the Chicago godfather. FBI wiretaps and documents show that the mafia money went to pay off key election officials, including local sheriffs, who were handed a total of $50,000 to get out the Kennedy vote by any means. In return, Joe promised the mobsters assistance in federal investigations.

To what extent the actual presidential election of 1960 was honest, or whether the real winner was actually awarded the presidency, remains a mystery. The election was certainly fraudulent in one respect. The main issue, insofar as there was one, was Kennedy's charge that the outgoing Eisenhower administration had allowed a `missile gap' to develop between the strategic forces of the US and Soviet Russia. In fact America had a comfortable lead in missiles. Both Jack and Bobby Kennedy, and Jack's speechwriter Joseph Kraft, all admitted later that the `gap' was a fiction. When Kennedy, as president, was privately taxed on the point, he laughed: `Who ever believed in the missile gap anyway?' The shift in power in the media, already noted, enormously helped Kennedy, and his team reinforced their advantage by assiduous courting of media personalities and by making Kennedy available for TV on all occasions, something which could not be taken for granted in 1960. Theodore H. White, covering the campaign for his book *The Making of the President,* reported overwhelming media bias in favor of Kennedy. One of Nixon's aides said to him, of the press, `*Stuff* the bastards. They're all against Dick anyway. Make them work—we aren't going to hand out prepared remarks.' White concluded: `To be transferred from the Nixon campaign to the Kennedy campaign ... was as if one were transformed from leper and outcast to friend and battle companion.'

It was the same with TV. Kennedy's greatest success during the campaign was his `victory' over Nixon in the official TV debates, especially the first, when Nixon was unmade—up, tired, and suffering knee trouble." It was learned later that Kennedy's staff had asked for the two candidates to stand up throughout the debate to cause discomfort in Nixon's weak knee, that they demanded an unusually warm temperature in the studio because they knew Nixon sweated easily, and that during the live transmission they put pressure on the studio director in the control room to show camera close—ups of Nixon mopping his brow and others emphasizing his five o'clock shadow, to confirm accusations that he looked like a 'used—car salesman' and give point to a campaign question: `Would you buy a used car from this man?' Hence viewers who watched the debates gave the result to Kennedy, though those who heard them on the radio thought Nixon had won.

Kennedy won the election by one of the smallest pluralities in American history, 34,227,496 to 34,107,646, though more handsomely in terms of electoral votes, 303 to 219. Nixon had deliberately decided to keep Catholicism out of the campaign, and succeeded in doing so. The day after the result, he said to his aide, Pete Flanigan: `Pete, here's one thing we can be satisfied about. This campaign has laid to rest for ever the issue of a candidate's religion in presidential politics. Bad for me, perhaps, but good for America.' In fact, Kennedy's Catholicism won him the election: whereas Eisenhower got 60 percent of the Catholic vote, Nixon received only 22 percent, less than any Republican candidate in the 20th century. In the Northern industrial states, where the margins were very close, the swing of the Catholic vote to a Catholic candidate made all the difference.

This was a crooked election, especially in Texas and Illinois, two states notorious for fraud, and both of which Kennedy won. In Texas, which gave its twenty—four college votes to

Kennedy by a margin of 46,000 votes (out of 2.3 million), one expert made the calculation that `a minimum of 100,000 votes for the Kennedy Johnson ticket simply were non—existent.' As Kennedy's running mate, Senator Lyndon B. Johnson, was a Texan politico of long experience and total lack of scruple, the charge, which was in part substantiated by local results (in one polling station, where only 4,895 voters were registered, 6,138 votes were counted as cast), was almost certainly true. In Illinois, Nixon carried 93 of the state's 102 counties, yet lost the state by 8,858 votes. This was entirely due to an enormous Democratic turnout in Chicago, under the control of the notorious Democratic city boss and mayor, Richard Daley. Daley gave Kennedy the Windy City by the astonishing margin of 450,000 votes, and the evidence was overwhelming that fraud was committed on a large scale in Kennedy's favor. The mafia played an important part in this fraud. Afterwards, its boss Giancana often boasted to Judith Campbell, the mistress he shared with the President, `Listen, honey, if it wasn't for me your boyfriend wouldn't even be in the White House.'

If Nixon, instead of Kennedy, had carried Texas and Illinois, the shift in electoral votes would have given him the presidency, and the evidence of electoral fraud makes it clear that Kennedy's overall 112,803 vote plurality was a myth: Nixon probably won by about 250,000 votes. Evidence of fraud in the two states was so blatant that a number of senior figures, including Eisenhower, urged Nixon to make a formal legal challenge to the result. But Nixon declined. There had never been a recount on a presidential election and the machinery for one did not exist. A study of procedures in six states where fraud was likely showed that every state had different rules for recounts, which could take up to eighteen months. A legal challenge, therefore, would have produced a `constitutional nightmare' and worked heavily against the national interest. Nixon not only accepted the force of this argument but he actually pleaded successfully with the *New York Herald Tribune* to discontinue a series of twelve articles giving evidence of the frauds, when only four had been printed.

So Kennedy now had the presidency. What was he to do with it? Bobby became attorney—general, and other members of the Kennedy extended household, the PR men, academics, assorted intellectuals, speechwriters, and fixers, moved into the White House and Washington. One person who knew exactly what to do in the White House, however, was the new President's wife, Jackie Bouvier Kennedy. She wanted to turn the Kennedy White House into what she called an updated version of King Arthur's mythic Camelot, and she succeeded. If the Sixties were an exciting and meretricious decade, Jackie's White House was the volcanic explosion of superficial cultural bustle which launched the age.

Like every other career move, Jack's marriage to Jackie had been decided by Old Joe. The Bouviers were upper class but poor. Jackie inherited a mere $3,000. Her mother was a friend of the socialite wife of Arthur Krock, Joe's pal and Kennedy's ghostwriter, and he urged Joe to bring them together. Joe more or less ordered his son to marry Jackie, whom he recognized would give Jack the social and cultural graces he conspicuously lacked. Before the engagement was announced, Old Joe had a long conversation with Jackie in which he urged that, if she agreed to marry his son, she would never lack for anything money could buy for the rest of her life. After the marriage, Joe also, at various stages, held meetings with Jackie, who was threatening to go to the divorce courts because of Jack's infidelities, to renegotiate the financial conditions under which Jackie would agree to allow the marriage to continue. This covert relationship between Old Joe and Jackie continued until Joe was disabled by a stroke after his

son became president, and it sometimes gave the impression that the marriage was a creation of Joe and Jackie rather than of Jack.

The reason why Joe had not only to bring about but assiduously to maintain Kennedy's marriage was that the one respect in which Jack carried on his father's traditions not merely dutifully but with genuine enthusiasm was in his pursuit, seduction, and exploitation of women. Old Joe went for women ruthlessly all his life, not hesitating to steal, or rather borrow, his sons' girlfriends if he could: co—ownership of women by different generations of males seems to have been a feature of the Kennedy family's sex life. Joe had employed his Hollywood power to get himself actresses and starlets, and had even possessed the redoubtable Gloria Swanson until she discovered he was buying her presents with her own money.

Jack, in turn, used his political glamour to secure political trophies from the movies, including Gene Tierney and Marilyn Monroe, the latter first shared with, then passed onto, Bobby (the behavior of the Kennedy brothers towards this fragile movie—actress, and their cover—up of the traces after her sudden death, was one of the shabbiest episodes in the entire Kennedy story). Most of Jack's affairs, however, were brief, often lasting a matter of minutes, and conducted with whomever was available and willing: girls without even first names, air stewardesses, secretaries, campaign workers, prostitutes if need be. He claimed he needed some kind of sexual encounter, however perfunctory, every day.

He committed adultery with various women throughout the 1960 campaign, preparing for each of the TV debates by having a prostitute, rustled up and paid by his staff, in the afternoon.36 He had a woman even on the night of his inauguration as president, after Jackie had gone to bed. His tenure of the White House was punctuated by both regular and casual affairs, sometimes in his own room when Jackie was away, sometimes in `safe' apartments, reached by tunnels under New York's Carlyle Hotel to escape observation. He did not always trouble to conceal what he was doing. Jackie retaliated by going on colossal shopping expeditions and by constantly redecorating all the houses they lived in, something which Kennedy hated anyway but particularly if he had to pay for it.

What Kennedy and his associates brought the presidency was the mastery of public relations. This is a two—edged weapon. In some ways the most dangerous kind of politician is a man who is good at PR and nothing else—and in some respects J. F. Kennedy fitted that description exactly. But Jackie brought style, and gave the White House a *reclame* during the years 1961—3 which it had rarely possessed before and never since. Old Joe, in picking Jackie as his son's wife, had said he wanted `looks, birth and breeding.' She had all three, and the breeding told. She was culturally omnivorous and made the President's home a center of the arts, at least in appearance. She encouraged all the best sides of education at Choate, Princeton, and Harvard without acquiring some worthy interests. She brought out his reading habits, his liking for intellectual company at times, his Anglophilia and Francophilia, his willingness to go to plays, operas, and the ballet, to entertain and to be gracious to a wide variety of people. She acted as a catalyst to the many clever men whom he brought into his circle and administration. Insofar as Kennedy was a respectable, useful, and valuable president, it was mainly Jackie's doing. Selfish, vain, and extravagant she undoubtedly was, then and later, but as chatelaine of the White House she gave the United States' first family something which it had nearly always lacked, sophistication and glamour, and as the President's wife she brought out in him such qualities as he possessed. And she gave her own creation, Camelot, a certain fierce, if brief and evanescent, reality, so that it burned with an intense flame for a year or two, until dramatically extinguished by murder.

Kennedy's actual presidency was dominated by competition with the Soviet Union, then run by the excitable, reckless but at times formidable Nikita Khrushchev. On January 7, 1961, shortly before Kennedy assumed office, Khrushchev outlined in a speech what he called the new areas of `peaceful competition' between the two superpowers, `national liberation wars' and `centers of revolutionary struggle against imperialism,' all over Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Kennedy took up this challenge, at any rate in rhetoric, using his inaugural as the occasion. Aiming particularly at youth, he declared the time to be an `hour of maximum danger' for freedom. His generation, he said, had been given the role of defending it. `I do not shrink from this responsibility,' he said. `I welcome it.' Under him, America would `pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, to ensure the survival and the success of liberty.' That was good deal further than any other president in history had been prepared to commit himself abroad, and certainly much further than Truman and Eisenhower. It was also much further than the American people were prepared to go, as they would make abundantly clear long before the end of the decade. Kennedy sought to put flesh on the bones of his rhetoric by a variety of devices: the Peace Corps of young US volunteers to serve abroad, the Green Berets for more forceful activities termed 'counter—insurgency;' campaigns for winning `hearts and minds' of locals in what were then known as `non—aligned countries;' the `Alliance for progress' in Latin America; and increased economic and military aid almost everywhere.

One of Kennedy's ventures played straight into the hands of what the departing Eisenhower had warned against, the 'military—industrial complex.' The Soviet Union, with the help of spies and prodigies of effort and spending, had exploded first A—bombs, then H—bombs, long before American experts had believed possible. On October 4, 1957, thanks to the work of German scientists and engineers recruited by Stalin from Hitler's long—range rocket program, Russia put Sputnik i, a 184—pound satellite, into orbit round the earth, following it next month by a larger one weighing 1,120 pounds. The first American satellite did not go into orbit until January 31, 1958, and it weighed only 30 pounds. In fact America was building far more efficient rockets than Russia, and was even more ahead in miniaturization, which explained why it was content with low payloads. Eisenhower was not prepared to invest heavily in space beyond the pragmatic needs of the military program. He detested the word `prestige' and he took no notice of the post—Sputnik panic. With Kennedy the priorities changed totally. He put his V—P, Lyndon Johnson, in charge of the Space Program, with instructions to `get ahead of Russia,' and the big—spending Texan, who had many links to the aerospace business world, was delighted to oblige. He picked James Webb, a publicity—conscious business operator, as head of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and spending, if not yet satellites, skyrocketed.

All the same, on April 12, 1961, less than three months after Kennedy had taken over, the Russians put their first man into orbit, beating America by four weeks. At a frenzied meeting Kennedy held two days later in the White House, he stormed: `Is there any place where we can catch them? What can we do? Can we go around the moon before them? Can we put a man on the moon before them? ... can we leapfrog? ... If somebody can just tell me how to catch up! Let's find somebody, anybody. I don't care if it's the janitor there, if he knows how.' On April 19 Kennedy had a forty—five—minute session with Johnson, followed by an excited directive the next day, ordering him to find out: `Do we have a chance of beating the Soviets by putting a laboratory in space, or by a trip round moon, or by a rocket to land on the moon, or by a rocket to go to the moon and back with a man? Is there any other space program that promises dramatic results in which we would win?' There is a sense in which Kennedy, who loved to use words like

`beating,' `results,' and `in,' was a professional sportsman, a political huckster, and a propagandist rather than a serious statesman.

In May he committed America to the Apollo Program, with its aim of landing a manned spacecraft on the moon `before this decade is out.' The program got going fully in 1963 and for the next decade America spent up to $5 billion a year on space, a typical Sixties project, with its contempt for finance and its assumption that resources were limitless. Naturally the aim was achieved. On July 20, 1969 Apollo 11 landed Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin on the moon. There were five more moon landings by 1972, when the program petered out. By then America and Russia had launched something over 1,200 space—probes and satellites, at a combined cost of something like $100 billion. In the more austere conditions of the mid—1970s, the space effort shifted from histrionics and propaganda to pragmatism and science, to space laboratories and shuttles. In 1981 America launched the first true spaceship, the Shuttle. The showbiz era of space travel was over.

Kennedy's biggest test, his biggest apparent triumph, and his biggest mistake, was his handling of Cuba. Cuba was, and is, too close to the United States ever to be a fully independent country. Under the Platt Amendment of March 2, 1901, incorporated into the original Cuba Constitution, the US recognized Cuba's independence and sovereignty on condition Cuba agreed not to make treaties compromising that independence, leased America a base in Guantanamo Bay, and permitted the US to land troops in case of civil disorders, threats to US investments, and so on. The Platt Amendment ended in 1934, but as late as the 1950s the US ambassador in Havana was `the second most important man in Cuba; sometimes even more important that [its] president.' During the decade, however, under the rule of the so—called strongman, Fulgencio Batista, Cuba dissolved into a morass of corruption and gangsterism. Under Platt, the US would have intervened, legally, and restored decency. Without Platt, the US government could do little other than lecture and exhort.

But there remained the US media, growing steadily in strength, influence, and righteousness. Where Washington hesitated, the *New York Times* stepped in, in the person of its reporter Herbert Matthews. Matthews picked, as America's democratic candidate to topple Batista and replace him, Fidel Castro, a self—appointed guerrilla leader who had taken to the Sierra with 150 followers. The drawback to this policy was that Castro was not a democrat, but a believer in Marxism—Leninism, and in Stalinist `democratic centralism,' and other authoritarian methods, and not least in violence. He was the spoiled son of a rich Spanish immigrant who had made a fortune out of a fruit plantation. Castro had flourished as an armed student revolutionary, and had committed a variety of crimes, including murder, in a number of Latin American countries. He was a Communist gangster, bent on achieving personal power at any cost. Matthews had not done his homework and knew little of Castro's record. He saw him as the T. E. Lawrence of the Caribbean, and was able to put the whole resources of the *New York Times* behind him, with the willing cooperation of certain key officials in the State Department. The pattern of muddle, duplicity, and cross—purposes leading to the fall of Batista and his replacement by Castro was one of the worst episodes of the entire Eisenhower administration and recalled FDR's diplomacy at its feeblest (it also foreshadowed the attempts of some State Department officials and US media elements to undermine the Shah of Iran in 1979). At all events it succeeded. Batista fled in January 1959, and Cuba was then at Castro's mercy. He was in effect put into power by the *New York Times.*

At what point Castro acquired, or revealed, his Communist beliefs is still unclear, though from some of his statements it looks as if he was a Marxist—Leninist, of sorts, since early student

days. By the second half of 1959 he had signed various agreements with Russia under which he received Soviet arms, advisors, and KGB experts to train his secret police. He had the army commander—in—chief murdered, clapped opponents of all kinds into jail, and staged show—trials of his principal enemies. By the beginning of 1960, Cuba was for all practical purposes a Communist dictatorship and, in a military perspective, a Soviet satellite. At the same time Castro made the first moves to implement his threat, contained in a 4,000—word manifesto published in 1957, that he would actively oppose `other Caribbean dictators.' This was the beginning of a military—political policy which was to take members of Castro's armed forces into a number of African, Asian, and Latin American countries, as agents of `anti—imperialist revolution.'

That such a regime, 90 miles from the United States coast, should align itself with America's principal enemy, and begin to export violence, was unacceptable, and the United States would have been well within its moral and legal rights in seeking to overthrow Castro and impose a democratic government. Cubans were already fleeing to the US in very large numbers, and demanding precisely that. But there was an uncertain response, first from Eisenhower, then from Kennedy. Eisenhower had taken a high moral line, during the Suez crisis of 1956, against the action of Britain and France in pursuing what they conceived to be their vital interest by occupying the Suez Canal Zone. The Cuban case was made to seem too close for comfort. So nothing was done under Eisenhower, though many plans were considered.

When Kennedy took over early in 1961, he found a proposal, apparently supported by the CIA, which had 2,500 agents in the island, and by the chairman of the joint Chiefs of Staff, for 12,000 armed Cuban exiles, known as the Cuban Liberation Corps, to be landed in an area called the Bay of Pigs and detonate a popular uprising. It is hard to believe that the wily and experienced Eisenhower would have given final approval to this naive scheme. It had all the disadvantages of involving America morally and politically (the first two men to step ashore were CIA operatives) without the guarantee of success provided by open US air and naval participation. Ike, on his record, would have waited for Castro to make the kind of false move which would have allowed America to intervene openly and legally, with its own forces, in a carefully planned professional air, land, and sea operation. One thing he always hated, in military matters, was amateurism, with politicians and generals getting their lines of command mixed up. Oddly enough, Kennedy's first response was similar. As he said to his brother Bobby, `I would rather be called an aggressor than a bum.'" But in the event he lacked the resolution, and he weakly allowed the Bay of Pigs operation to go ahead on April 17, 1961.

The very name of the target area should have rung alarm—bells among Kennedy's PR—conscious inner circle. Its selection was also the one aspect of the plan the Chiefs of Staff most disliked. They were also worried about the CIA's insistence that the operation was to be preceded by an air strike launched from bases in Nicaragua, by US combat aircraft painted to resemble Cuban aircraft acquired by the exiles. Nor were they happy that US destroyers were to accompany the Cuban exile invasion fleet, with US aircraft providing air cover to within five miles of the landing place. In the event, the operation was a total disaster from the start, primarily because Castro was able to read all about it, in advance, in the US media; and, once things went wrong, Kennedy refused to authorize the US carrier *Essex*, cruising io miles offshore, to come to the rescue of the stricken men pinned down on the swampy bay. Castro's troops, well prepared for the incursion, killed 114 of the invaders and took prisoner the rest, 1,189, nearly all of whom were executed or later died in Castro's prisons. Kennedy retrieved something from the mess by following advice to take responsibility for himself and publicly pointing out that, had the venture succeeded, no one would have criticized it, using an excellent one—liner produced by his

resourceful writers: `Success has a thousand fathers but failure is an orphan.' Actually Ike had the last laugh, albeit a sad one. Alluding to the title of Kennedy's book, he wrote: `The operation could be called "A Profile in Timidity and Indecision." '

American opinion was outraged by the Bay of Pigs failure and would have supported direct intervention. One senior policymaker, Chester Bowles, thought a decision by Kennedy `to send in troops or drop bombs or whatever ... would have had the affirmative votes of at least 90 percent of the people.' Richard Nixon, consulted, told the President: `I would find a proper legal cover and I would go in.' But the administration dithered and, lacking a policy, took refuge in plotting, encouraged by the wilder spirits of the CIA. Kennedy's Defense Secretary, Robert McNamara, admitted later: `We were hysterical about Castro at the time of the Bay of Pigs and thereafter.' Richard Helms, whom Lyndon Johnson had made head of the CIA, testified: `It was the policy at the time to get rid of Castro, and if killing him was one of the things that was to be done ... we felt we were acting well within the guidelines ... Nobody wants to embarrass a President ... by discussing the assassination of foreign leaders in his presence.'

In fact none of these schemes came to anything. In the event, it was Nikita Khrushchev, the impetuous Russian dictator, who gave Kennedy the opportunity to pull something out of the Cuban mess. Khrushchev had his own `missile gap,' real or imaginary. He thought the balance of intercontinental missiles was heavily in America's favor, and that he could alter it overnight by stationing medium—range missiles in Cuba. It was an absurdly dangerous move, which was a principal factor in leading Khrushchev's colleagues to remove him, in due course. Castro later claimed he was opposed to it. He told two French journalists: `The initial idea originated with the Russians and with them alone ... it was not in order to insure our own defense but primarily to strengthen socialism on the international plane.' He agreed only `because it was impossible for us not to share the risks which the Soviet Union was taking to save us ... It was in the final analysis a question of honor.'

It was on October 16, 1962 that Kennedy received incontestable evidence that Russia was preparing to install nuclear missiles in Cuba, that the sites were being prepared, and that the actual missiles and warheads were on the way. The scheme was as crack—brained as the Bay of Pigs venture but infinitely more dangerous, and accompanied by a combination of boasting and deception. Castro said that Khrushchev swanked to him that his move was something Stalin would never have dared. His colleague Anastias Mikoyan told a secret briefing of Soviet diplomats in Washington that it would bring about `a definite shift in the power relationship between the socialist and the capitalist worlds.' Khrushchev deliberately lied to Kennedy: when questioned, he admitted Russia was arming Castro but gave assurances that only shortrange surface—to—air missiles were being installed. The lie was peculiarly childish, since US aerial surveillance instantly revealed the truth. Khrushchev sent forty—two medium—range 1,100—mile nuclear missiles and twenty—four 2,200—mile nuclear missiles (the latter never arrived), together with twenty—four SAM anti—aircraft missile groups and 42,000 Soviet troops and technicians. There was never any possibility of concealing this large—scale strategic military activity, and all the sites were fully photographed by Uz aircraft on October 15, Kennedy being told the next day that, by December, about fifty strategic missiles would he deployed and ready for use, and that they would be capable of destroying the main US defenses in seventeen minutes. In fact by mid—October nine tactical missiles, equipped with nuclear warheads and with ranges of 30 miles, were already operational and their local Soviet commander had authority to use them at his own discretion.

So on October 16 a thoroughly alarmed Kennedy set up an executive committee of the National Security Council, or Ex—Comm, to deliberate and decide policy. A wide range of opinions was canvassed, inside and outside the administration. Adlai Stevenson advised demilitarization of Cuba, the surrender of the US base at Guantanamo, and the removal of US Jupiter missile bases from Turkey, in return for Soviet withdrawal of their missiles. At the other end of the spectrum, hardliners such as Dean Acheson and Vice—President Johnson advised immediate air—strikes to knock out the sites, followed by invasion of the island if necessary. A few of those consulted argued that America's overall strength in strategic weapons was so great that the provocation should be ignored. But, almost from the start, Kennedy rejected any such approach. He had been infuriated by Khrushchev's lying and was determined that the missiles had to go. But he was also persuaded by Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and his Under—Secretary, George Ball, that an unannounced air—strike on the sites would smack of Pearl Harbor and was not in the US tradition. As Rusk put it, `The burden of carrying the Mark of Cain on your brow for the rest of your lives is something we all have to bear.' The military backed this view, pointing out that not all the Soviet missiles might be knocked out on a first strike and that their commanders might then fire them off at America, with devastating consequences. Bobby Kennedy also observed that Russia might retaliate by occupying Berlin.

In the end, Kennedy and his colleagues decided to hold air—strikes in reserve, and in the meantime impose a `quarantine' on Cuba, forbidding further Soviet ships to enter the area, on penalty of being fired upon. This was announced directly to Khrushchev in Moscow on October 22, a week after the alert, and at the same time publicly to the American people on prime—time TV. It was characteristic of Kennedy that he decided, having deliberated in secret, to play the crisis publicly and extract the maximum advantage from a tough but flexible and cautious line. He gave a deadline of October 24 for compliance with his quarantine, put in because it was essential to prevent Russians from working on the sites under cover of diplomatic delays. On the 24th Soviet missile—carrying ships approaching the quarantine line stopped, and slowly turned about. Other ships, not carrying war material, agreed to permit inspection. But it remained to get the Soviet missiles out. On the 25th Kennedy contacted Khrushchev again asking for `a restoration of the earlier situation' (that is, removal of the missiles). Khrushchev demanded, in return, a pledge not to invade Cuba and the removal of the Jupiter missiles from Turkey. Kennedy ignored the second demand but complied with the first, and it was on this basis that Khrushchev agreed to remove the missiles on October 28.

This was what the world knew at the time, and it hailed a Kennedy victory, as did the President himself. Chortling over Khrushchev's discomfiture, he crowed, `I cut his balls off.' Castro, not having been consulted by Khrushchev and learning the news on the radio, smashed a looking—glass, shouted abuse of his Soviet friend, and called him `a man with no *cojones*.' The view of Khrushchev's colleagues was different but equally unfavorable. When the Soviet Praesidium dismissed him two years later, it referred to his `harebrained scheming, hasty conclusions, rash decisions and actions based on wishful thinking.' There is no doubt the world came close to nuclear war, probably closer than at any other time, before or since. On October 22 all American missile crews were placed on maximum alert. Some 800 B47s, 550 B52s, and 70 B58s were prepared with their bomb—bays closed for immediate takeoff from their dispersal positions. Over the Atlantic were ninety B52s carrying multi—megaton bombs. Nuclear warheads were made active on a hundred Atlas, fifty Titan and twelve Minuteman missiles, and on American carriers, submarines, and overseas bases. All commands were in a state of Defcon—2, the highest state of readiness next to war itself. The world was not precisely aware of

this at the time but most people imagined that war was close, and were correspondingly relieved when the stand—down came on October 28, and inclined to give Kennedy the credit for it. Then, and for some years afterwards, it was considered the finest hour of the Kennedy presidency.

From the perspective of over thirty years, the Cuban missile crisis looks different and its consequences mixed. In the first place, it now appears Kennedy privately agreed with Anatoly Dobrynin, the Soviet ambassador in Washington, using Bobby as intermediary, that he would pull out the Jupiters from Turkey (and Italy), and later did so. Second, nearly all the 42,000 Soviet troops and experts in Cuba remained and began intensive training of what was to become one of the largest and most mobile armies in the world, which would be exported as politico—military mercenaries, on anti—Western missions, to large parts of Africa and Asia in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s. Third, Kennedy appears to have agreed with Krushchev to restrain any efforts by Cuban exiles to invade Cuba. They certainly regarded the agreement, at the time and since, as a sell—out. Their view was shared by some at least of the US force commanders, especially General Curtis LeMay, head of Strategic Air Command, who pounded the table and told Kennedy: `It's the greatest defeat in our history, Mr President.' LeMay was a hardliner, and excitable, and he exaggerated. It was not the `greatest defeat.' But it was defeat. The missile crisis took place at a time when the strategic nuclear equation was still strongly in America's favor, and in a theater where America enjoyed overwhelming advantages in conventional power. Kennedy was thus in a position to demand an absolute restoration of the *status quo ante*, without any American concessions or pledges. Indeed he could have gone further; he could have insisted on punishment—on Soviet public acceptance of a neutral, disarmed Cuba. As Dean Acheson rightly observed: `So long as we had the thumbscrew on Khrushchev, we should have given it another turn every day.' Instead, Kennedy not only gave way over the Jupiters but acquiesced in the continuance of a Communist regime in Cuba in open military alliance with Soviet Russia.

But history moves in mysterious ways, its wonders to perform. From the perspective of the end of the century, it is no longer clear that the continuance of the Castro regime in Cuba was wholly to America's disadvantage. It is true that Castro became, for a quarter of a century, America's most persistent and (in some ways) successful minor enemy: to export revolution to South America in the i96os and, more cunningly, to Central America in the late 197os and early i98os; to vilify American `imperialism' systematically at Third World gatherings, while posing as a `non—aligned' nation; and, in the 1970s, to send no fewer than three expeditionary forces to Africa as executants of Soviet policy. With remarkable audacity, Castro posed as a defender of the oppressed in the United States itself, and was rewarded by the adulation of a segment of American liberal opinion. To Saul Landau, Castro was `steeped in democracy.' To Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy he was a 'passionate humanitarian.' Other US visitors testified to his `encyclopedic knowledge.' He made them think of the `connection between Socialism and Christianity.' He was, said US liberal visitors, `soft—spoken, shy and sensitive' and, at the same time, vigorous, handsome, informal, undogmatic, open, humane, superbly accessible, and warm. Norman Mailer thought him `the first and greatest hero to appear in the world since the Second World War.' When Castro stood erect, wrote Abbie Hoffman, `he is like a mighty penis coming to life, and when he is tall and straight the crowd immediately is transformed.' In the second half of the 1960s, throughout the 1970s, and for most of the 1980s, Castro and his propaganda provided the greatest single input into the machinery of anti—Americanism, both in the United States itself and throughout the world.

But in the end Castro proved a diminishing asset for America's enemies, and increasingly a horrible warning to opponents of the freeenterprise system. As early as 1981 it was calculated that since Castro took over Cuba it had experienced an annual average per—capita growth—rate of minus 1.2 percent. By 1990 the minus growth—rate had increased to an average of over 2 percent. This was because the Soviets, who had been subsidizing the Cuban economy at the rate of $11 million a day in the 1980s, reduced and eventually cut off supplies. By the mid—1990s Cuba was calculated to have the lowest standard of living in the entire western hemisphere, Haiti being the only possible exception. The plight of the unfortunate Cubans, many of whom were reported to be going hungry in 1995—6, served to reinforce to Latin Americans generally the advantages of the free—enterprise economy, which became such a feature of the 1980s and 1990s. The ordinary Cubans had long since rejected Castro by voting with their feet and their outboard motors. In the 1960s alone over a million fled from Castro. By 1980, in which year 150,000 political refugees were added to the total, it was calculated that 20 percent of the nation were living abroad, most of them in the United States. Waves of Cuban refugees continued to reach America's shores in the 1980s and 1990s. Sometimes Castro attempted to poison this outflux by releasing common criminals from his jails (this was partly to create space for his 100,000 political prisoners) and by sending them to the US as `political refugees.' But this was a policy of despair. In fact, the Cuban community in the United States grew and flourished. By the second half of the 1990s, it had founded 750,000 new businesses, become the richest and most influential political lobby after the Jewish Lobby, and its 2 million members generated a Gross Domestic Product eleven times larger than that of Cuba itself, with 11 million inhabitants. Moreover, Miami, center of the new Cuban settlement, forming links with the entire Latin American society of the hemisphere, became in many ways its financial, economic, communications, and cultural center, hugely boosting American exports in goods and, still more, in services throughout the western half of the globe. In the long run, then, the grand beneficiary of the Cuban missile crisis was indeed the United States.

In 1962—3, however, the last year of the presidency, Kennedy basked in the glory of having extricated the world gracefully from the most dangerous crisis in its history. He was popular everywhere. The Europeans liked him. He went to Germany and made a clever speech in West Berlin, June 26, 1963, in which he electrified the citizens by saying, `All free men, wherever they may live, are citizens of Berlin, and therefore, as a free man, I take pride in the words, *Ich bin ein Berliner*.' This was bad German—it meant `I am a doughnut'—but it showed good intent. He was able to announce on TV, July 26, 1963, important progress on nuclear weapons negotiations: `Yesterday, a shaft of light cut into the darkness ... For the first time an agreement has been reached on bringing the forces of nuclear destruction under international control.' During the final months of his presidency, the legend of Camelot, under the skillful ministrations of Jackie Kennedy and the many expert wordsmiths and publicity men working in and surrounding the White House, went round and round the world, growing and glowing. But Kennedy had to remember that his majority in 1960, if it had existed at all, had been wafer—thin, and that much remained to be done to make his reelection in 1964 reasonably certain. In the second half of 1963 he planned many political expeditions into swing and marginal states, not least Texas, at the urging of his Vice—President, Lyndon Johnson, who was unhappy at the administrations's polling there, and by divisions in the Democratic Party.

Among other engagements, Johnson arranged for the President to visit Dallas on November 22, 1963 and process in a 10—mile motorcade through the downtown area. Kennedy remarked

to his wife that morning, `We're heading into nut country today,' a characteristic Bostonian summing up of one of the richest and most enterprising cities in America, the capital of the Bible Belt, surrounded by one of the largest collections of religious universities and training colleges in the world. This was the pre—security era, and Kennedy was scarcely better protected than President McKinley when he was shot by an anarchist on September 6, 1901. The open car in which Kennedy rode had a protective bubble but the day was so fine that he asked for it to be removed so people could see him better. At 12.35, near the end of the motorcade, as it passed along Elm Street, a sniper on the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository fired three shots from a rifle. One hit the President in the back below his collar—bone, another in the back of the head, killing him, and a third wounded the Texas governor, John B. Connally. The world was stunned.

The time of death was certified as 1.00 P.M. Ninety minutes later, Dallas police arrested Lee Harvey Oswald, a twenty—four—year—old former marine, who became a Soviet citizen in 1959 before returning to the United States in 1962, and working at the Depository. He was charged with killing a Dallas police officer, J. D. Tippitt, who had tried to detain him on suspicion of the assassination. Nine hours later he was formally accused of killing the President, a charge he denied. Two days later, a strip—joint owner called Jack Ruby, who was known to various police officers and therefore had access to the local station premises, approached Oswald as he was being transferred, pulled out a concealed handgun, and killed him. He said his motive was grief for the murdered President.

The fact that Oswald could never be brought to trial led Lyndon Johnson, who was sworn in as president aboard Air Force One ninety—eight minutes after the certification of Kennedy's death, to appoint a commission of inquiry headed by the Chief Justice, Earl Warren (1891—1974). The inquiry, which included a senior Southern senator, Richard Russell of Georgia, a future president, Gerald Ford (b. 1913), and the former head of the CIA Allen Dulles, reported (September 1964) that the facts had been as the police had charged and that Oswald had committed the crime and acted alone. It stated that Oswald was an evident `loner,' a self—styled Marxist, a Castro supporter, who tried and failed to murder General Edwin Walker, a notorious Dallas right—winger. The authorities in Russia, where he had lived for thirty—two months, had regarded him as an unstable character and kept him under surveillance. No evidence was found that he acted in concert with anybody or any organization, but the rifle which killed Kennedy, found in the Depository, had Oswald's palm—print on its stock. These findings disappointed the conspiracy theorists though without silencing them. In more than thirty years since the crime took place, however, no further evidence of any significance has emerged, and virtually all historians now accept that Oswald alone was responsible.

Kennedy left behind him a number of growing but unsolved problems: a war in Vietnam, a civil—rights agitation in large parts of the South, and a rising demand, throughout the United States, for better social security provision. His successor, Lyndon Johnson (1908—73), was well qualified to tackle them, better qualified in many ways than Kennedy. The thirty—sixth president had been born on a farm near Stonewall, Gillespie County, Texas, and had moved with his parents to Johnson City five years later. He attended public schools in Blanco County, Texas, graduated from Southwest Texas State Teaching College at San Marcos in 1930, teaching high school for three years, 1928—31. He served in Washington as secretary to Congressman Richard M. Kleberg (1931—5), meanwhile attending Georgetown Law School (1934) and was then appointed by F. D. Roosevelt, who liked and admired him, state director of the National Youth

Administration of Texas, 1935—7. He was elected to Congress April 10, 1937, by special election, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of James Buchanan and was subsequently reelected to five successive Congresses, serving April 1937 to January 1949. He was the first member of Congress to enlist after the beginning of World War Two and served as lieutenant—commander in the US Navy 1941—2. He was elected to the US Senate in 1948 and reelected 1954 and 1960, serving as Democratic whip 1951—3, minority leader 1953—5 and majority leader 1955—61, when he was elected vice—president. He had been a member or chairman of a number of important Senate committees and subcommittees.

Johnson had thus been a professional politician virtually all his life, had a thorough grounding in the politics of Texas, one of the largest, richest, and most complex of states, was well versed in Washington executive politics, and was a master of Congressional procedure. Few presidents have ever been better grounded for the post, and none had possessed such skill in piloting legislation through Congress. Johnson appealed strongly to senior fellow—professionals. When he was only twenty—six, FDR had picked him out as a possible successor. His fellow—Texan, Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House from 1940, had treated him like a son, and in the Senate he had from the start enjoyed the patronage of Senator Richard Russell, leader of the Southern Democratic bloc. Johnson ate, drank, and played recklessly, but he also worked with fanatical industry and singlemindedness, both to enrich himself and to push his way up the political ladder. He regularly lost two stone in weight during his campaigns, and he was perfectly capable of getting through a fifteen— or eighteen—hour day for weeks at a time. He picked fellow—professionals to serve him and exacted the highest standards of devotion and loyalty from them all. He had little but contempt for his predecessor: `[Kennedy] never said a word of importance in the Senate and never did a thing ... It was the goddamnest thing ... his growing hold on the American people was a mystery to me.

There was a dark side to Johnson. He was unscrupulous. In Texas politics, where he acted as a fund—raiser for FDR, he was closely linked to his contractor ally, Brown & Root, for which he had negotiated enormous government contracts to build the Corpus Christi Naval Air Station. The company illegally financed Johnson's unsuccessful 1941 Senate campaign, and from July 1942. IRS agents began to investigate both them and LBJ himself. They found overwhelming evidence not only of fraud and breaches of the Hatch Act in the use of campaign money, but of lawbreaking in many other aspects of Brown & Root's business, including tax evasion of over $1 million. Both LBJ and Herman Brown, head of the firm who had begun life as a two—dollar—a—day rod carrier for a surveyor, could have gone to jail for many years. The investigation was derailed as a result of the direct intervention of FDR himself, January 13, 1944 and the matter ended with a simple fine: no indictment, no trial, and no publicity. After this, LBJ was involved in various Texan political intrigues of a more or less unlawful nature and in building up a personal fortune (most of it in the name of his wife, the long—suffering `Lady Bird' Johnson) in radio—TV stations and land.

There was also the case of Robert G. ('Bobby') Baker, a gangling South Carolinan who had served Johnson as secretary and factotum in the years when he was Senate leader. Baker was known, on account of his power and influence, as `the hundred and first Senator,' and LBJ said of him, fondly: `I have two daughters. If I had a son, this would be the boy ... [He is] my strong right arm, the last man I see at night, the first one I see in the morning.' In the autumn of 1963, a private suit against Baker in a federal court, alleging that he had improperly used his influence in the Senate to obtain defense contracts for his own vending—machine firm, provoked a spate of similar accusations against his probity, and in a number of them LBJ was involved. The

accusations were so serious that, just before his assassination, Kennedy was considering dropping LBJ from his 1964 ticket, even though he feared that to do so would imperil his chances of carrying Texas and Georgia. At Republican urging, the Senate agreed to investigate the case. But by that time LBJ was president and the full weight of his office was brought to bear to avoid the need for testimony either from Johnson himself or from his aide Walter Jenkins, who possessed a good deal of guilty knowledge. The Senate committee, on which Democrats outnumbered Republicans six to three, voted solidly on party lines to protect the President.

To make sure the truth did not emerge, LBJ directed two of his closest allies, Clark Clifford (b. 1906), later Defense Secretary, and Abe Fortas (1910—82), later Supreme Court justice, to organize a cover—up. (It is notable that the careers of both these men ended in scandals.) Among other things, the most pertinacious of LBJ's pursuers, Senator John J. Williams of Delaware, was subjected to a White House dirtytricks campaign, which included persecution by the IRS. Baker was finally indicted in 1967 on nine charges, convicted and, after appeals, went to jail in 1971, actually serving seventeen months. LBJ avoided investigation, trial, and jail completely, though the facts of his involvement are now well established. Among the Senators who played important roles in protecting LBJ from exposure were Sam Ervin, Herman Talmadge, and Dan Inouye, all of whom, and especially the first, were assiduous in hounding President Nixon during the Watergate case in 1973.

LBJ was also a man of unpleasant, sometimes threatening, personal habits. He was huge and, despite his height, his head seemed too big for his body. It was equipped with enormous ears, which stood out like those of an angry African elephant. Unlike Kennedy, who normally received guests in the Oval Office, with others present, LBJ saw people alone, in an adjoining closet, with four TV sets, each adjusted to a different channel and transmitting, though as a concession to visitors he would turn the sound down. He propelled himself forward, until his large head and penetrative nose were only inches from the visitor's face. As Doris Kearns, the most intimate of his biographers, put it, he `invaded your personal space.' Members of Congress, from whom LBJ wanted a service or a vote, thus `closeted' (a form of political pressure first invented by Louis XIV in the 17th century), emerged shaken and compliant. Some of his staff were frankly terrified of him. He said of one, about to join his entourage, `I don't want loyalty. I want *loyalty*. I want him to kiss my ass in Macy's window at high noon and tell me it smells like roses. I want his pecker in my pocket.' Actually, what LBJ's pockets contained were not peckers but innumerable bits of paper, which he produced to impress or convince interlocutors, containing statistics, quotes, extracts from FBI or CIA files, and his own medical records. He was particularly anxious to persuade people that, despite his heart attack in 1955, he was fit, and he showed no hesitation in flourishing his cardiographs and other charts of his condition. He had no respect for privacy, his own or anyone else's. He was more devoted to the phone than any other president, before or since, and insisted phones be installed in all rooms, including those of his staff's private houses, the bathroom not excluded. He would summon staff to confer with him, or receive orders, while seated on the toilet, another characteristic he shared with Louis XIV.

LBJ, the large, unrestrained, earthy animal, had a voracious sexual appetite, no more discriminating than Kennedy's, but less interesting. He had a twenty—one—year affair (1948—69) with a Dallas woman called Madeleine Brown, which produced a son, Steven, and countless more transitory encounters, including (so he boasted) intercourse with a secretary at his desk in the Oval Office. He was an inveterate bottom—pincher, especially in swimming pools. In view of LBJ's constant philandering, especially on White House premises, it is curious that no scandal

erupted during his five years as president (the only exception was, ironically enough, a homosexual episode, involving LBJ's chief of staff, Walter Jenkins, which broke on October 14, 1964). LBJ's immunity was due to his close relationship to J. Edgar Hoover, whom LBJ, like Kennedy before him, retained as head of the FBI for sound personal reasons. He defended his decision in a memorable and characteristic quip: `Better to have him inside the tent pissing out, than outside, pissing in.'

Another factor in LBJ's immunity was the acquiescence of Lady Bird, who told a TV producer, long after LBJ's death: `You have to understand, my husband loved people—all people. And half the people in the world are women. You don't think I could have kept my husband away from half the people?' Lady Bird, like Jackie Kennedy, operated as a civilizing influence in the Johnson White House. It was she who repaired the culinary damage after the highly sophisticated Kennedy chef walked out, soon after the Johnson regime began, in protest at LBJ's insistence that beetroot salad be served at every meal. The Johnsons entertained prodigiously: over 200,000 guests to meals during their five White House years. A Texas woman who had spent much of her childhood in Alabama, Lady Bird, like her husband, used the Southern idiom to great effect, but in contrast to his coarseness, her vernacular brought delight. `See you tomorrow, if the Lord be willin' and the creek don't rise.' `I'm as busy as a man with one hoe and two rattlesnakes.' `The kind of people who would charge hell with a bucket of water.' `Nosier than a mule in a tin barn.' `Doesn't the fire put out a welcoming hand?' Praising people she met (very characteristic) she would say: `I find myself in mighty tall cotton.' She also devoted herself, with remarkable success, to unusual good causes, such as the sowing of seeds of wildflowers on the verges of the intercontinental highway system Eisenhower had built, a project she developed with the help of the English scientist Miriam Rothschild.

But if Lady Bird was the emollient, LBJ was the master, and the White House, during his tenancy, became the most active engine for passing legislation, and spending money, in the entire history of peacetime America. No president, not even Woodrow Wilson in the prewar period, provided so adept at getting Congress to do his bidding. And his bidding was imperiously ambitious. LBJ, despite his occasional boasts of childhood poverty, had come from a reasonably comfortable, though modest, home. But as a young schoolteacher he had become aware of the extensive poverty and deprivation which, in the United States, coexisted with general affluence. He was a generous man, who had done well for himself and wanted to share the animal comforts of affluence with as many people as possible. By temperament and conviction he was a Big Spender and he thought America, in the mid—1960s, after twenty years of uninterrupted growth and prosperity, was in a position to resume the New Deal on a much more ambitious scale—FDR being always his hero and exemplar. He thought nothing of Kennedy's anemic program, the `New Frontier,' most of which had got stuck in the Congressional quagmire anyway. LBJ insisted that it was time to give all Americans the benefits of a fully financed welfare state. In a speech at the University of Michigan, May 22, 1964, he declared: `In your time we have the opportunity to move not only towards the rich society and the powerful society, but upward to the Great Society.' By `great' he meant magnanimous, and magnanimity, greatness of heart, was LBJ's redeeming, indeed salient, characteristic. He reiterated this pledge at a pre—election rally on October 31, 1964: it was the central theme of his bid, after inheriting the presidency from Kennedy, to get a full mandate of his own. And he succeeded in abundant measure. He was assisted by the decision of the Republicans, who did not think they could beat LBJ anyway, to nominate a quixotic ideologue and perceived extremist from a small state, Senator Barry

Goldwater of Arizona (b. 1909). Johnson's overwhelming victory gave him 43,128,958 votes to 27,176,873 for Goldwater and a college margin of 486—52.

Thus mandated, as he saw it, LBJ began his legislative and spending spree, calling on Congress to enact his Great Society program on January 3, 1965. Congress complied. The Great Society, as LBJ conceived it, was concerned not merely with raising the poor and ending the economic anxieties of all, but with improving the quality of life, including access to power of the blacks and the ability of all to exercise their civil rights. The program actually began to be enacted before LBJ's stunning electoral victory, and it continued until his retirement. The Civil Rights Act (1964) and the Voting Rights Act (1965) were the most important civil rights enactments, and undoubtedly achieved their main objectives, helped by the adoption in 1964 of the Civil Rights Amendment, the Twenty—fourth, which ruled poll taxes and other tax barriers to voting unconstitutional. Medicare and Medicaid (1965) and the Older Americans Act (1965) went some way to reducing anxieties over health care. The Omnibus Housing Act (1968) provided $6 billion to build housing for poor and middle—income families and introduced rent—supplement allowances. It was expanded by the Housing and Urban Development Act (1968). The Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act (1966) provided funds to abolish ghettos, improve urban transport and landscaping, plant parks and other urban amenities, initially in six cities, eventually in 150. It supplemented the Mass Transit Act (1964), which made the first major commitment of federal funds ($375 million) to subsidize bus, subway, and rail commuter systems.

LBJ had announced, in a speech to Congress on March 16, 1964, `For the first time in our history, it is possible to conquer poverty,' and he declared an `unconditional war on poverty.' This produced legislation in form of the Equal Opportunity Act (1964) and the Appalachian Regional Development Act (1965), which together allocated over $2 billion a year to various programs, and the Head Start Act (1965) and Higher Education Act (1967), which introduced better educational opportunities for the poor and less affluent. The Great Society program also included important environmental legislation, including the Clean Water Restoration Act (1966), which put $4 billion into anti—pollution control projects, and the Wilderness Areas Act (1964), which banned development from over 9 million acres of public domain; these designated wilderness areas by 1994 had risen to 602, totaling 95.8 million acres. Johnson's measures involved a gigantic bureaucratic expansion, including the establishment of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Transportation, as well as such federal—funded bodies as the National Endowments for the Humanities and the Arts, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. It also spawned bodies and agencies on the lines of Kennedy's Peace Corps, with names like Volunteers in Service to America, the Jobs Corps, Upward Bound and the Model Cities Program.

All this cost a great deal of money. During the five—year Johnson administration, federal spending on education, for instance, rose from $2.3 billion to $10.8 billion, on health from $4.1 billion to $13.9 billion, and on the disadvantaged from $12.5 billion to $24.6 billion. In current dollars, the rise of federal spending under Johnson was enormous—to $183.6 billion by fiscal 1969. Thanks to Johnson, by 1971 for the first time the federal government spent more on welfare than defense. In the thirty years 1949—79, defense costs rose ten times, from $11.5 billion to $114.5 billion, but remained roughly 4 to 5 percent of GNP. Welfare spending, however, increased twenty—five times, from $10.6 to $259 billion, its share of the budget went up to more than half, and the proportion of the GDP it absorbed tripled to nearly 12 percent. Some of Johnson's programs, being mere fashions, or to use the new 1960s word, `trends,'

petered out by the end of the decade. But most expanded, and some went out of control financially.

Critics of these projects coined the phrase `throwing money at problems,' and certainly quantities of money were thrown in the second half of the decade by the federal government. And as the cost increased, so did the volume of critical voices, which complained that the prodigious expenditure was not producing results. Whether it did or not, the actual expenditure introduced a revolution in the history of public finance in the United States. We will deal with its long—term implications later, but at this point it is necessary to draw attention to two aspects. First, was it within the intentions of the Founding Fathers that the Constitution should permit the federal government, as opposed to the individual states, to shoulder the main burden of welfare, as opposed to such obviously federal outgoings as national defense? If not, then the whole of the Great Society program was unconstitutional. Second, since the reforms of Alexander Hamilton in the 1790s, American federal finance had been conducted, on the whole, with exemplary prudence. The national debt had risen in times of war (the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World War One, World War Two) and times of extreme emergency (the Great Depression). But it had been reduced in times of peace. Under Andrew Jackson, in 1840, it had been eliminated altogether, as we have noted. During the Civil War it rose to over $2.76 billion, but in the next twenty—eight years it was reduced by two—thirds, though the GDP in the meantime had more than doubled. The debt rose to $25 billion at the end of World War One, and was then reduced by a third in the 1920s. It rose again during the Great Depression to $48 billion in 1939, and during World War Two it rose again, very fast, to reach $271 billion by 1946. It then fell again, both in constant dollars and as a proportion of GDP, until 1975. Since then, without either war or national emergency, it has risen inexorably.

Strictly speaking, then, the change in the nature of US federal financing did not actually occur under LBJ. But permanent deficit financing did. Under him, the annual deficit jumped to $3.7 billion in 1966, $8.6 billion in 1967, and $25.1 billion in 1968. In March 1968, the Treasury Secretary, Henry Fowler, protested strongly to President Johnson that, with the cost of the Vietnam War soaring, and various domestic programs roaring ahead, the dollar would soon come under serious threat. The result was the enactment of tax increases the same year, which actually produced a surplus of $3.2 billion in fiscal 1969, the last federal budget surplus of the 20th century. But meanwhile the Great Society programs continued to absorb more and more money, and by fiscal 1975 federal spending had risen to $332 billion, causing a huge budget deficit of $53.2 billion. It was at this point that serious efforts to control expenditure and bring the budget back into balance were abandoned (as we shall see) by a weak executive and a triumphalist, irresponsible Congress. Johnson can likewise be held responsible for the critical increase in the federal government's share of GDP, which had peaked at 43.7 percent in 1945, fell to 16 percent in 1950, then slowly rose again. It reached 20 percent under LBJ and, under the impact of his programs, rose again to 22 percent in 1975, stabilizing in the years down to 1994 at between 22 and 24.4 percent.

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The Treasury Secretary's alarm in 1968 was actually provoked by fresh administration demands for a larger military commitment in Vietnam, and that is the tragedy we must now examine. America's involvement in Vietnam stretched over twenty years (1954—75). American military

personnel began to serve there in 1954 and the last fifty were evacuated on April 30, 1975. In all, 8,762,000 Americans performed Vietnam—era military service: 4,386,000 army, 794,000 marines, 1,740,000 air force, and 1,842,000 navy. Of these, about 2 million servicemen actually fought in Vietnam or operated offshore. There were 47,244 US battle—deaths in all services, 153,329 hospitalized wounded, 150,375 `lightly wounded,' and 2,483 missing. The weight of firepower used by the US military was enormous: the navy and air force carried out 527,000 bombing missions, unloading 6,162,000 tons of explosives, which was three times the tonnage dropped by US bombers in World War Two. Vietnamese losses were calamitous. About 300,000 civilians were killed in South Vietnam and 65,000 in North Vietnam. South Vietnamese forces lost 123,748 killed and 570,600 wounded. North Vietnamese casualties were estimated at 660,000 killed, the number of wounded being unknown. The war's direct expense to the United States was $106.8 billion. These figures do not include America's more limited, but still significant, involvement in the fighting in Cambodia and Laos. But this, too, had long—term consequences for the US. About 1.5 million refugees left the Indochinese states after America finally pulled out in 1975, many of them departing in small craft and becoming known as the Boat People. The United States began allowing large numbers of Boat People to immigrate in 1978. Over the next six years it admitted 443,000 Vietnamese, 137,000 Laotians, and 98,000 Cambodians. The influx slowed to about 30,000 yearly in the late 1980s, and the 1990 US census showed that 905,512 Indochinese were now American citizens, thus adding yet another ethnic layer to America's multiracial mix.

In its duration, the number of Americans involved, its costs, and its consequences, Vietnam was not only the longest but one of the most important wars in American history. Yet strictly speaking it was not a war at all, and certainly was never waged as such by the Americans—otherwise the outcome would have been entirely different. It was an `involvement,' and a product of the Cold War. America's involvement stretched over seven presidencies and was a unique succession of misjudgments, all made with the best intentions. Indochina was a 19th century French colony, ruled by Paris with a variable degree of administrative efficiency, corruption, and altruism. It was occupied by the Japanese in 1941 and F. D. Roosevelt, knowing nothing about it, offered it to nationalist China. Generalissimo Chaing Kai—shek turned it down, remarking to FDR that the Indochinese were quite different people to the Chinese, and that he wished to have nothing to do with them. Immediately after FDR's death, the fervent anti—colonialists of the Office of Strategic Services, predecessor—but—one of the CIA, worked hard to set up a left—wing nationalist regime, which would prevent the French from returning. Three weeks after the Japanese surrender, the Communist leader Ho Chi Minh, sponsored by the OSS, staged a *putsch*, known as the `August Revolution,' which ousted the pro—French Emperor of Vietnam. The man who, in effect, crowned Ho Chi Minh as the new ruler was an OSS agent, Archimedes Patti.

It is important to emphasize that America never had any territorial ambitions in Indochina, either as a base or in any other capacity. But its policy was often founded on ignorance, usually muddled and invariably indecisive. Truman, on taking office, was advised that the first priority was to get France back on its feet as an effective ally against Russia in Europe, and to bolster its self—confidence it was convenient for it to be allowed to resume authority in Indochina. In December 1946, with American approval, the French drove Ho Chi Minh back into the jungle and brought the Emperor Bao Dai back from exile in Hongkong. It was at this point that the French created three puppet nations, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, and gave them independent status within the French Union, February 7, 1950. America acquiesced in this step. Russia and

China recognized Ho's regime, and began to arm it. America responded by doing the same for the French regime, and, with the outbreak of the Korean War, US aid accelerated. In 1951 it was giving $21.8 million in economic and $425.7 million in military assistance. By 1952 America was paying 40 percent of France's military costs. Dean Acheson was warned by State Department officials that the US was drifting into a position in which it would eventually supplant France as the `responsible power' in Indochina. But he replied that `having put our hand to the plough, we could not look back.' By 1953—4 America was paying for 80 percent of the French war effort.

On May 8, 1954 the French suffered a catastrophic defeat when their `impregnable' fortress at Dien Bien Phu surrendered. The French asked for the direct assistance of US airpower, and when Eisenhower turned the request down they formed a new government and opened negotiations to withdraw. The ceasefire agreement, signed at Geneva in July, provided for a division of the country along the 17th parallel, the Communists keeping the north, the West the rest, unity to be brought about by elections in two years' time under an international control commission. Eisenhower, having rejected US military intervention, refused to be a party to the Geneva accords either, and created SEATO instead. A protocol attached to the new treaty designated South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos as areas whose loss would `endanger' the `peace and security' of the signatories. This was the expression of the then—fashionable Domino Theory. Eisenhower had made this theory public in April 1954: `You have a row of dominoes set up. You knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is a certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you could have the beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound consequences.' He also spoke of `a cork in a bottle' and `a chain—reaction.'9= Beware public men when they use metaphors, especially mixed ones! Ike not only ignored the accords but encouraged the new Prime Minister of the South, Ngo Dien Diem, to refuse to submit to the test of free elections, which if held in 1956 would probably have handed over the country to Ho, until the South was economically stronger and more stable. As a result, the Communists created a new guerrilla movement for the South, the Vietcong, which emerged in 1957 and started hostilities. Eisenhower in effect made America a party to the war by declaring, April 4 1959: `The loss of South Vietnam would set in motion a crumbling process that could, as it progressed, have grave consequences for us and for freedom.'

It was under Kennedy and Johnson, however, that the American tragedy in Vietnam really began to unfold. When Kennedy reached the White House, Vietnam was already one of America's largest and costliest commitments anywhere in the world, and it is hard to understand why he made no attempt to get back to the Geneva accords and hold free elections, which by that stage Diem might have won. In Paris on May 31, 1961, General de Gaulle, who knew all about it, urged him to disengage: `I predict you will sink step by step into a bottomless military and political quagmire." Kennedy had a hunch that Southeast Asia would prove a trap. The Bay of Pigs debacle made him think twice about further involvement, especially in Laos, where the Communists were threatening. He told Sorenson in September 1962, `Thank God the Bay of Pigs happened when it did. Otherwise we'd be in Laos by now—and that would be a hundred times worse.' He also said to Arthur Schlesinger that he was worried about sending in troops to Vietnam. `The troops will march in; the bands will play; the crowds will cheer; and in four days everyone will have forgotten. Then we will be told to send in more troops. It's like taking a drink. The effect wears off, and you have to take another.'

Nevertheless, in November 1961 Kennedy did send in the first 7,000 US troops to Vietnam, the critical step down the slippery incline into the swamp. That was the first really big US error.

The second was to get rid of Diem. Diem was by far the ablest of the Vietnam leaders and had the additional merit of being a civilian. Lyndon Johnson, then Vice—President, described him with some exaggeration as `the Churchill of Southeast Asia,' and told a journalist, `Shit, man, he's the only boy we got out there.' But Kennedy, exasperated by his failure to pull a resounding success out of Vietnam, blamed the agent rather than the policy. In the autumn of 1963 he secretly authorized American support for an anti—Diem officers' coup. It duly took place on November 1, Diem being murdered. The CIA provided $42,000 in bribes for the officers who set up a military junta. `The worst mistake we ever made' was Lyndon Johnson's later verdict.

Three weeks later Kennedy was murdered himself, Johnson was president, and began to make mistakes on his own account. Warning signals ought to flash when leaders engage in historical analogies, especially emotive ones. LBJ compared the risk of Vietnam going Communist to the `loss' of China in 1949: `I am not going to lose Vietnam,' he declared. `I am not going to be the President who saw Southeast Asia go the way China went.' He drew, for the members of the National Security Council, a still more dangerous parallel: `Vietnam is just like the Alamo.' And again, to the so—called `Tuesday Cabinet:' `After the Alamo, no one thought Sam Houston would wind it up so quick. But this was just big talk. LBJ proved as indecisive over Vietnam as Kennedy was, and in addition he made the further mistake (like Eden over Suez) of imagining he could run the war on political principles.

Johnson continued the war in desultory fashion until August 2, 1964, when North Vietnam attacked the American destroyer *Maddox*, which was conducting electronic espionage in the Gulf of Tonkin. Hitherto Johnson had been reluctant to escalate. But he now summoned Congressional leaders and, without disclosing the nature of the *Maddox* mission, accused North Vietnam of `open aggression on the high seas.' He then submitted to the Senate a resolution authorizing him to take `all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.' Senator William Fulbright of Arkansas, chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, who steered the 'Tonkin Resolution' through Congress, said it effectively gave Johnson the right to go to war without further authorization. Only two senators voted against. Later, when more information became available, many in Congress argued that Johnson and his advisors had deliberately misled senators into supporting the expansion of the war. In fact Johnson did nothing for six months. He was fighting an election campaign against Senator Goldwater, who openly advocated the bombing of North Vietnam. Johnson sensed the public would be unhappy about getting into `another Korea' and played down the war during the campaign. In fact if anything he advocated a `peace' line during the campaign, just as Wilson had done in 1916 and Roosevelt in 1940. Then, having won his overwhelming victory, he did the opposite—again like Wilson and Roosevelt. In February 1965, following heavy US casualties in a Vietcong attack on a barracks, he ordered the bombing of the North.

This was the third critical American mistake. Having involved itself, America should have followed the logic of its position and responded to aggression by occupying the North. LBJ should have put the case to the American people, and all the evidence suggests that, at this stage, the people would have backed him. They were looking for leadership and decisiveness. The military were quite open to the politicians about the problem. The Joint Chiefs reported on July 14: `There seems to be no reason we cannot win if such is our will—and *if that will is manifested in strategy and tactical operations.*' The emphasis was in the original. When Johnson asked General Earl Wheeler, of the JCS, `Bus, what do you think it will take to do the job?,' the answer was 700,000 to a million men and seven years. Johnson was not prepared to pay this bill. He

wanted victory but he wanted it on the cheap. That meant bombing; it was the old reflex of the Jupiter Complex, the belief that America, with its superior technology, could rain punishment on the evildoers from the air, without plunging wholly into the mud of battle. LBJ believed the SAC commander, Curtis LeMay, who said that Vietnam could be `bombed back into the Stone Age.'

But there was no attempt to bomb Vietnam back into the Stone Age. Even in selecting the cheap bombing option, LBJ was indecisive. He was not misled by the generals. The air force told him they could promise results if the offensive was heavy, swift, repeated endlessly without pause, and without restraint. That was the whole lesson of World War Two. They promised nothing if it was slow and restricted. The navy took exactly the same view. Admiral Ulysses S. Grant Sharp, naval commander in the Pacific, said: `We could have flattened every war—making facility in North Vietnam. But the handwringers had center stage ... The most powerful country in the world did not have the will—power to meet the situation.' Instead it was a case of `pecking away at seemingly random targets.' From start to finish, the bombing was limited by restrictions on quantity, targets, and timing which were entirely political and bore little relation to tactics or strategy. Every Tuesday Johnson had a lunch at which he determined targets and bomb—weights. Johnson was not always the ruthless man he liked to impersonate. He could be paralyzed by moral restraints. As his biographer Doris Kearns shrewdly observed, to him `limited bombing was seduction, not rape, and seduction was controllable, even reversible.' So the bombing was intensified very slowly and the North Vietnamese had time to build shelters and adjust. When Soviet Russia moved in defensive ground—to—air missiles, American bombers were not allowed to attack while the sites were under construction. There were, in addition, sixteen `bombing pauses,' none of which evoked the slightest response, and seventy—two American `peace initiatives,' which fell on deaf ears. Unlike the Americans, the North Vietnamese leaders never once wavered in their determination to secure their clear political aim—total domination of the entire country—at any cost. They do not seem to have been influenced in the smallest degree by the casualties their subjects suffered or inflicted.

There was thus a bitter irony in the accusations of genocide which came to be hurled at the Americans. An examination of classified material in the Pentagon archives revealed that all the charges made against American forces at the 1967 Stockholm `International War Crimes Tribunal' were baseless. For instance, evacuation of civilians from war zones to create `free fire' fields not only saved civilian lives but was actually required by the 1949 Geneva Convention. The heavy incidence of combat in civilian areas was the direct result of Vietcong tactics in converting villages into fortified strongholds, itself a violation of the Geneva agreement. And it was the restrictions on American bombing to protect civilian lives and property which made it so ineffective. The proportion of civilians killed, about 45 percent of all war deaths, was about average for 20th— century wars. In fact the population increased steadily during the war, not least because of US medical programs. In the South, the standard of living rose quite fast.

All this went for nothing. The experience of the 20th century shows that self—imposed restraints by a civilized power are worse than useless. They are seen by friend and enemy alike as evidence not of humanity but of guilt and of lack of moral conviction. Despite them, indeed because of them, Johnson lost the propaganda battle, at home and abroad. And it was losing the battle at home which mattered. Initially, the war had the support of the media, including the moderate liberal consensus. Two of the strongest advocates of US involvement were the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*. The *Post* wrote, April 7, 1961, `American prestige is very much involved in the effort to protect the Vietnamese people from Communist absorption.' *The New York Times* argued, March 12, 1963, that `The cost [of saving Vietnam] is large, but the

cost of Southeast Asia coming under the domination of Russia and Communist China would be still larger.' On May 21, 1964 the Times urged: `If we demonstrate that we will make whatever military and political effort [denying victory to Communism] requires, the Communists sooner or later will also recognize reality.' The *Post* insisted, June 1, 1964, that America continue to show in Vietnam that `persistence in aggression is fruitless and possibly deadly.' But the *Times* deserted Johnson early in 1966, the *Post* in summer 1967. About the same time the TV networks became neutral, then increasingly hostile.

There were three reasons why first the media, then public opinion, turned against the war. The first was that the bombing campaign, chosen as an easy option, proved to be not so easy after all. To bomb the North, a huge airbase had to be created at Da Nang. Once the bombing started, the base had to be protected. So on March 3, 1965, 3,500 marines were landed at Da Nang. By April, the total US troop level in Vietnam had risen to 82,000. In June a demand came for forty—four more battalions. On July 28 Johnson announced: `I have today ordered to Vietnam the Airmobile division and certain other forces which will raise our fighting strength ... to 125,000 men almost immediately. Additional forces will be needed later, and they will be sent as requested.'

The more Americans became involved in ground defense and fighting, the more of them were wounded and killed. The term `body bags' came into general and ominous use. Selective Service, or the draft, reimposed at the time of the Korean War and extended periodically by Congress since, became increasingly unpopular. It was widely believed to be unfair and easily avoided by the rich and well connected. Of the 2 million conscripted during the Vietnam War, providing 23 percent of all military personnel and a massive 45 percent of the army, no fewer than 136,900 refused to report for duty, an unprecedented number. Draft calls had been only 100,000 in 1964. By 1966 they had risen to 400,000. Draftees made up the bulk of the US infantry riflemen in Vietnam, as many as 88 percent by 1969, and accounted for over half the army's battle deaths. Because of student deferments, the draft fell disproportionately on working—class white and black youths. Blacks, 11 percent of the US population, made up 16 percent of the army's casualties in Vietnam in 1967, and 15 percent for the entire war. So opposition mounted, accompanied by clergy—led protests, the burning of draft—cards, sit—ins at induction centers, and burglaries of local draft—board premises, with destruction of records.

The government responded, between 1965 and 1975, by indicting 22,500 persons for violations of the draft—law. Some 6,8oo were convicted and 4,000 imprisoned. But the Supreme Court expanded the basis on which the draft could be refused from purely religious to moral and ethical reasons, and `Conscientious Objections' grew, in relation to those summoned to the forces, from 8 percent in 1967 to 43 percent in 1971. In the last five years of the 196os, about 170,000 of those registered qualified as conscientious objectors. That made those who actually served even angrier. In addition, about 570,000 evaded the draft illegally. Of these, 360,000 were never caught, 198,000 had their cases dismissed, and about 30,000—50,000 fled into exile, mainly to Canada and Britain. The worst thing about the draft was that the rules were frequently changed or evaded so that young people felt that the way in which they were being recruited and sent to an unpopular war was unAmerican and unfair. There is no doubt that the draft was behind the unprecedented rise in anti—war protest among American youth in the late 1960s.

The second reason why America turned against the war was not so much editorial criticism as tendentious presentation of the news. The US media became strongly biased in some cases; more often it was misled, skillfully and deliberately, or misled itself. A much publicized photograph of a `prisoner' being thrown from a US helicopter was in fact staged. Accounts of American `tiger cages' on Con Son island were inaccurate and sensationalized. Another widely used photo of a

young girl burned by napalm gave the impression, in fact quite wrong, that many thousands of Vietnamese children had been incinerated by Americans. A photo, used many times, of a youth being shot in cold blood by one of America's Vietnamese 'allies'—and apparently genuine—gave the misleading impression that captured Vietcong were habitually executed. Once the TV presentation of the war became daily and intense, it worked on the whole against American interests. It generated the idea that America was fighting a `hopeless' war. Not only did the media underplay or ignore any US successes, it tended to turn Vietcong and North Vietnamese reverses into victories.

Media misrepresentation came to a decisive head in the handling of the Vietcong 'Tet Offensive' on January 30, 1968. The military position at this time was that the Americans and their Vietnamese allies, having strongly established themselves in all the urban centers of the South, were winning important successes in the countryside too. That persuaded the Communists to change their tactics, and try their first major offensive in the open. On the first day of Tet, the lunar New Year holiday previously observed as a truce, their units attacked five of Vietnam's six cities, most of its provincial and district capitals, and fifty hamlets. The Vietnam forces and units of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), though taken by surprise, responded quickly. Within a week they had regained all the ground the attackers had won, except in one town, Hue, which was not retaken until February 24. Media coverage concentrated on the fact that the Vietcong enjoyed initial successes in attacking the Government Palace in Saigon, the airport, and the US embassy compound, and the cameras focused on the continued fighting in Hue rather than US successes elsewhere. In military terms, the Tet Offensive was the worst reverse the Vietcong suffered throughout the war: they lost over 40,000 of their best troops and a great number of heavy weapons. But the media, especially TV, presented it as a decisive American defeat, a Vietcong victory on the scale of Dien Bien Phu. An elaborate study of the coverage, conducted in 1977, showed exactly how this reversal of the truth, which was not on the whole deliberate, came about.

The image not the reality of Tet was probably decisive, especially among influential East Coast liberals. In general American public opinion backed forceful action in the war. According to the pollsters, the only hostile category was what they called the `Jewish sub—group.' Johnson's popularity rating rose whenever he piled on the pressure: it leaped 14 percent when he started the bombing. He was criticized for doing too little, not for doing too much: what the polls showed was that Americans hated the indecisiveness in Washington. Despite the draft, support for intensifying the war was always greater among the under—thirty—fives than among older people, and young white males were the group most consistently in favor of escalation. Among the people as a whole, support for withdrawal never rose above 20 percent until after the November 1968 election, by which time the decision to get out had already been taken. The American citizenry were resolute, even if their leaders were not.

The crumbling of American leadership began in the last months of 1967 and accelerated after the media reaction to Tet. The Defense Secretary, Clark Clifford, turned against the war; so did old Dean Acheson. Even Senate hardliners began to oppose further reinforcements. Finally Johnson himself, diffidently campaigning for reelection, lost heart on March 12, 1968, when his vote sagged in the New Hampshire primary. He said he had decided not to run for reelection and would spend the rest of his term trying to make peace. It was not the end of the war by a long way, but it was the end of America's will to win it. The trouble with the Washington establishment was that it believed what it read in the newspapers—always a fatal error for

politicians. New Hampshire was presented as a victory for peace. In fact, among the anti—Johnson voters, the hawks outnumbered the doves by three to two. Johnson sagged in the primary, and so lost the war, because he was not tough enough.

The faltering of Johnson's once strong spirit in the Vietnam War was the result of media criticism, especially from its East Coast power—centers, which itself reflected a change in American attitudes towards authority. One of the deepest illusions of the Sixties was that many forms of traditional authority could be diluted—the authority of America in the world, and of the President within America—without fear of any consequences. Lyndon Johnson, as a powerful and in many ways effective president, stood for the authority principle. That was, for many, a sufficient reason for emasculating him. Another was that he did not share East Coast liberal assumptions, in the way that F. D. Roosevelt and Kennedy had done. He had been doubtful about running for president even in 1964 for precisely that reason: `I did not believe that ... the nation would unite definitely behind any Southerner. One reason ... was that the Metropolitan press would never permit it.' The prediction proved accurate, though its fulfillment was delayed. By August 1967, however, the Washington correspondent of the *St Louis Post Dispatch*, James Deakin, reported: `the relationship between the President and the Washington press corps has settled into a pattern of chronic disbelief.' If media misrepresentation of the Tet Offensive was the immediate cause of LBJ's decision to quit, both office and Vietnam, more fundamental still was its presentation of any decisive and forceful act of the Johnson White House as in some inescapable sense malevolent. The media was teaching the American people to hate their chief executive precisely because he took executive decisions.

This sinister development in American history became more pronounced when Johnson yielded office to Richard Nixon. Nixon had suffered some reverses since he lost—or at any rate conceded—the 1960 election. But he never gave up. Nor did the East Coast media stop loathing him, or he reciprocating the feeling. In 1962 he ran for governor of California, and largely because of the Cuban missile crisis lost the race to a weak left—wing Democratic candidate, Pat Brown, who turned out to be one of the worst governors in California's history. The media campaign, led by the East Coast reporters, had been particularly unfair, and Nixon snapped out to the press afterwards: `Just think how much you're going to be missing. You won't have Nixon to kick around any more because, gentlemen, this is my last press conference.' In fact it was not the end, but the beginning, and kicking around of Nixon by the media was to go on for another decade and more. The catastrophic defeat of Goldwater in 1964 persuaded the Republican bosses that they would have to field an experienced, mainstream candidate against Johnson in 1968. So Nixon made his comeback without much difficulty; his only mistake was to accept, as running mate, the crass and dishonest, but right—wing, Spiro Agnew, governor of Maryland.

The stepping down of Johnson plunged the Democrats into confusion. A strong contender for the succession was Bobby Kennedy, for the Camelot myth was then still powerful; but he was assassinated by Sirhan Sirhan, a Marxist Palestinian refugee, during the California primary on June 6. That made LBJ's Vice—President, Hubert Humphrey, the front runner, and he duly got the Democratic nomination. He was an experienced campaigner and might conceivably have won if LBJ had given him the loyal support he had a right to expect and, in particular, made it easier for him to advocate withdrawal from Vietnam. But Johnson was a bitter man by now and not averse to seeing the Republicans take over. In addition, the South ran a breakaway candidate, Governor George Wallace of Alabama, then still a segregationalist. As a result, Nixon won comfortably, by 31,710,470 votes to Humphrey's 30,898,055, with Wallace collecting 9,466,167: the electoral college votes went 302 (Nixon), 191 (Humphrey), 46 (Wallace).

All the same, the Wallace intervention meant that Nixon was a minority victor. He got 43.4 percent of the popular vote, the lowest percentage since Woodrow Wilson won the three—man race of 1912. As the poll was low (61 percent), it meant that Nixon got only 27 percent of all voters. What sort of a mandate was that? asked the hostile media, pointing out that Nixon did not carry a single big city. In parts of the media, there was an inclination to deny the legitimacy of Nixon's presidency and to seek to reverse the verdict by non—constitutional means. `Remember,' Nixon told his staff, `the press is the enemy. When news is concerned, nobody in the press is a friend. They are all enemies.' That was increasingly true. As one commentator put it, `The men and the movement that broke Lyndon Johnson's authority in 1968 are out to break Richard Nixon in 1969 ... breaking a president is, like most feats, easier to accomplish the second time round.'

It was something new for the American media to wish to diminish the presidency. Hitherto, opposition to a strong chief executive had come, as was natural, from Congress, and especially from the Senate. As FDR put it, `The only way to do anything in the American government is to bypass the Senate.' That was one point on which his opponent, Wendell Wilkie, agreed with him: he spoke of devoting his life to `saving America from the Senate.' Under both FDR and Truman, the press and academic commentators had strongly supported firm presidential leadership, especially in foreign policy, contrasting it with Congressional obscurantism. During the McCarthy era, Eisenhower had been fiercely criticized for failing to defend executive rights against Congressional probing, the *New Republic* complaining (1953): `The current gravitation of power into the hands of Congress at the expense of the Executive is a phenomenon so fatuous as to be incredible if the facts were not so patent.' When Eisenhower finally invoked `executive privilege' to deny information about government activities to the UnAmerican Activities Committee, he was warmly applauded by the liberal media. The committee, said the *New York Times*, had no right `to know the details of what went on in these inner Administration councils.' Eisenhower, wrote the *Washington Post*, `was abundantly right' to protect `the confidential nature of executive conversations.' Until the mid—1960s, the media continued to support resolute presidential leadership, on civil rights, on social and economic issues, and, above all, on foreign policy, endorsing Kennedy's dictum (1960): `It is the President alone who must make the major decisions on our foreign policy.'

It was the Tonkin Gulf Resolution which accelerated the change, and the accession of Nixon which confirmed it. Despite these handicaps, Nixon's first administration was, on the whole, successful in clearing up the problems left by the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. His senior White House men, Bob Haldeman and John Erlichman, were able and devoted—too devoted, perhaps. He had a brilliant National Security Advisor in Henry Kissinger. He brought in one or two clever and original Democrats, such as Daniel Patrick Moynihan. His speechwriters, who included William Safire, Pat Buchanan, Ray Price, David Gergen, and Lee Huebner, were probably the best team of its kind ever assembled. Nixon and Kissinger between them developed the first clear geopolitical strategy for America since the retirement of Eisenhower. Nixon did not want to devote too much time to Vietnam: he wanted to `wind it down' as it was essentially a `short—term problem.' He wanted to concentrate on the things that really mattered: the Atlantic Alliance, relations with China and Russia. He believed that friendly relations with China could be brought about by intelligent diplomacy, that China would then be separated from Russia, and that, in the end, the regime in Russia, which he regarded as fundamentally inefficient, could be fatally undermined—something which indeed came about in the 1980s. He and Kissinger were at one on all these matters. And they had considerable success. Nixon called Vietnam by Ike's

phrase, `a cork in a bottle,' and he did not want to pull the cork out too quickly. But he began the process of disengagement. He said, `We seek the opportunity for the South Vietnamese people to determine their own political future without outside interference,' and so long as he was fully in charge of US policy he stuck to this resolve. He regarded the existence of the Vietcong and North Vietnam Army (NVA) sanctuaries in Cambodia as such `interference' and he decided to bomb them. He regarded such an act as neither an extension of the war nor an unwarranted invasion of another country's neutrality. The neutrality had already been invaded by the Communists, and it was right to bomb them. But, not wishing to incur the charge that he was `extending' the war, he had the bombing conducted secretly. Indeed, it was not even noted in the military's own records.

At the same time, Nixon scaled down the US presence. In four years, he reduced American forces in Vietnam from 550,000 to 24,000. Spending declined from $25 billion a year under Johnson to less than $3 billion. This was due to a more intelligent use of US resources in the area. They became more flexible, being used in Cambodia in 1970, in Laos in 1971, in more concentrated bombing of North Vietnam in 1972, all of which kept the determined men in Hanoi perplexed and apprehensive about America's intentions. Nixon actively pursued peace negotiations with the North Vietnamese, without much optimism, but he also did something neither Kennedy nor Johnson had dared: he exploited the logic of the Sino—Soviet dispute and reached an understanding with China. It was Nixon's Californian background which inclined him towards Peking. He saw the Pacific as the world arena of the future. He began his new China policy on January 31, 1969, only eleven days after he started work in the White House. The policy was embodied in National Security Memorandum 14 (February 4, 1969). He was much impressed by a conversation he had with the French politician and Sinologist Andre Malraux, who told him it was a `tragedy' that `the richest and most productive people in the world' should be at odds with `the poorest and most populous people in the world.' Reports of serious clashes on the long Sino—Soviet border in central Asia offered an opportunity for Nixon to offer China a friendly hand. He warned the Soviet leaders secretly (September 5, 1969) that the US would not remain indifferent if they were to attack China: Kissinger rightly described this move as `perhaps the most daring step of his presidency.' His first moves towards China were also secretive and he went to considerable lengths to get pledges of silence from the Congressional leaders he consulted. He told his staff: `A fourth of the world's people live in Communist China. Today they're not a significant power, but 25 years from now they could be decisive. For the US not to do what it can at this time, when it can, would lead to a situation of great danger. We could have total *detente* with the Soviet Union but that would mean nothing if the Chinese are outside the international community.'

The new China policy, and the change in US military strategy, made possible peace with Hanoi. On January 22, 1973, in Paris, Nixon's Secretary of State William Rogers and Le Duc Tho of North Vietnam signed `An Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam.' The merit of this understanding, which made it possible for America to leave Vietnam, was that it reserved Nixon's right to maintain carriers in Vietnamese waters and to use aircraft stationed in Taiwan and Thailand if the accords were broken by Hanoi. So long as Nixon held power, that sanction was a real one. Granted the situation he had inherited, and the mistakes of his predecessors, Nixon had performed a notable feat of extrication.

But America, and more tragically the peoples of Indochina, were denied the fruits of this successful diplomacy because, by this point, the Nixon administration was already engulfed in

the crisis known as Watergate. This was the culmination of a series of assaults on authority which had its roots in the Sixties culture. Indeed in some respects the challenge to authority went back to the 1950s and, in its early stages at least, had the approbation, if not the outright approval, of the federal establishment. It started among blacks (and their white liberal allies), mainly in the South, and emerged from the frustration felt by many blacks at the slow pace of their acquisition of civil rights, especially educational and voting ones, through court process and legislative change. The first outbreak of physical activity—we will look at the legal position later—began in Montgomery, Alabama on December 1, 1955. Rosa Parks, a black woman, refused to give up her bus seat to a white rider, thereby defying a Southern custom which required blacks to yield seats at the front to whites. When she was jailed, a black boycott of the company's buses was begun, and lasted a year. `Freedom riders' and sit—in movements followed in a number of Southern states. The boycott, which ended in a desegregation victory for blacks (December 1956) was led by Martin Luther King (1929—68), from Atlanta, Georgia, who was pastor of a black Baptist church in Montgomery. King was a non—violent militant of a new brand, who followed the example of Mahatma Gandhi in India in organizing demonstrations which used numbers and passive resistance rather than force and played the religious card for all it was worth. In 1957 he became the first president of a new umbrella group, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. King's house was bombed and he and some colleagues were convicted on various conspiracy charges, but King slowly emerged as a natural leader whom it was counterproductive for Southern sheriffs and courts to touch, and whose outstanding oratory was capable of enthusing enormous black crowds.

The Montgomery boycott was followed by the first anti—segregation sit—in, February 1, 1960, when four black college students asked to be served at Woolworth's whites—only lunch—counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, were turned down, and refused to leave. Sit—ins spread rapidly thereafter. On May 4, 1961 the tactic was reinforced when the first Freedom Riders, seven blacks and six whites, tested equal access to services at bus terminals from Washington DC to New Orleans. These tactics proved, on the whole, highly successful, with private companies usually ending segregation after initial resistance (and some white vio
lence), and the courts ruling that discrimination was unlawful anyway. Such activities almost inevitably involved the use or threat of force, or provoked it, and, as the Sixties wore on, urban violence between blacks and whites grew, and King himself came under competitive threat from other black leaders, such as the black racist Malcolm X and the proponent of `black power,' Stokely Carmichael. It was important for King to be seen to succeed in getting civil rights legislation through Congress. He backed the campaign of James Meredith (1961—2) to be enrolled at the whites—only University of Mississippi, and Meredith succeeded in getting himself admitted (and graduating). But his appearance on campus led to riots, September 30, 1962, in which two died, and Meredith himself was later shot and wounded on an anti—segregation `pilgrimage' from Memphis to Jackson, Mississippi (June 6, 1966).

In the spring of 1963 King's organization embarked on a large—scale desegregation campaign in Birmingham, Alabama, which produced scenes of violence, widely shown on TV, and some memorable images of the local white police chief, Eugene `Bull' Connor, directing his water cannon and police dogs at the black protesters. King was briefly jailed and later an attempt to bomb him led to the first substantial black mob riot of the campaign (May 11, 1963). Mass demonstration in black communities throughout the nation culminated on August 28, 1963 in a march of 250,000 protesters, led by King, to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC, where King delivered a memorable oration on the theme of `I have a dream that my four

little children will one day live in a nation where they will be judged not by the color of their skin but by ... their character.' This demonstration was part of the process which led to the passing of the Civil Rights Act (1964). The Act restored the federal government's power to bar racial discrimination for the first time since the 19th century. Title II requires open access to gas stations, restaurants, lodging houses and all `public accommodations' serving interstate commerce, and places of entertainment or exhibition. Title VI forbids discrimination in programs accepting federal funds. Title VII outlaws any employment discrimination and creates the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The Civil Rights Act gave the blacks much more than they had ever had before, but not everything, and the rise of the Black Panther party, with its strategy of `picking up the gun,' inspired militancy in many inner cities and serious rioting. King was under pressure from both the advocates of violence, to hit harder at Washington, and from the administration, to cool things down. His relations with Lyndon Johnson, once warm, deteriorated and he went in fear of his life from black extremists (his rival, Malcolm X, had been murdered by a black Muslim on February 21, 1965). King was involved in a bitter sanitation workers' strike in Memphis when he made his last prophetic speech, April 3, 1968: `We've got some difficult days ahead, but it doesn't matter with me now because I've been on the mountain—top.' The next day he was assassinated.

One reason King and LBJ moved apart was that King was lending his name and presence increasingly to anti—Vietnam demonstrations. Black leaders were against the war because of the high incidence of casualties (and draft service) among blacks. Black demonstrations and anti—Vietnam demonstrations thus tended to merge, especially when linked to the new forms of student protest which emerged in the Sixties. Black militants had been active among students, forming the Student Non—Violent Coordinating Committee (1960), the work of King's colleague in the Christian Leadership Conference, Ella Baker, who was one of the organizers of the early sit—ins. This committee, under James Forman, Bob Moses, and Marion Barry (later mayor of Washington DC), was behind many of the Southern protests in Mississippi and Alabama, drawing students into the protest movement, which theoretically eschewed force but became involved in scenes of violence, sometimes ending in death. The same year, mainly white student activists formed Students for a Democratic Society, the anchor—body for what became known as the New Left. With the student population growing by hundreds of thousands every year during the Sixties, the opportunities for mass demonstrations grew, especially under the stimulus of the Vietnam War. The New Left's first success was the Free Speech Movement in the University of California at Berkeley (1964), in protest at restrictions on student involvement in politics. The collapse of the authorities at Berkeley was followed by further student riots at Columbia University (1968), at Harvard (1969), and on many other campuses, in virtually all of which student leaders won huge concessions. If the 1960s saw the degradation of authority, it was in many instances a self—degradation, the men in authority breaking and running at the first whiff of student grapeshot.

As the Sixties turned into the Seventies, the trend was for campus demonstrations to acquire coordination and specific political purpose, and so to become correspondingly more violent and alarming to those in power. When President Nixon appeared on national TV, April 30, 1970, to announce draft—extensions on account of the trouble in Cambodia, there was an organized series of demos at campuses all over America, some of which degenerated, or were pushed, into riots. At Kent State University in Ohio, students set fire to the local army cadet building, and this act of arson led the governor of Ohio to send in 900 National Guardsmen, who occupied the

campus. President Nixon had made his feelings plain the day after his TV address, when he was accosted in the Pentagon by the wife of a serving soldier, and told her he admired men like her husband: `I have seen them. They are the greatest. You see these bums, you know, blowing up the campuses. Listen, the boys that are on the college campuses today are the luckiest people in the world, going to the greatest universities, and here they are burning up the books ... Then out there [in Vietnam] we have kids who are just doing their duty. And I have seen them. They stand tall and they are proud.' The media reporting of these remarks, which accused Nixon of calling all students `bums,' further inflamed the campus rage. On May 4, some of the young guardsmen on duty at Kent reacted to rocks thrown at them by students by firing a volley into the crowd, killing four students, two of them girls, and injuring eleven more. This in turn detonated student riots in many campuses: over zoo incidents involving the burning, ransacking, and destruction of university property were recorded. The National Guard were called out to restore order at twenty—one campuses in sixteen states. Over 450 colleges had to be closed down for a spell. And Nixon's contrast between privileged students engaged in nihilism and hard—working kids from poor families getting on with life struck home. On May 7 in New York a crowd of construction workers stormed City Hall and beat up students who were occupying it—the first `hard hat' demo against the New Left. This was Nixon's `silent majority' beginning to react, adumbrating his historic landslide victory of November 1972.

The hostility of the media towards Nixon and his administration, which became more and more intense in 1970—2, mingled with the attacks by the new youth culture on authority of any kind, gave a misleading impression that Nixon was in trouble. It led the Democrats, in 1972, to permit themselves the indulgence of a candidate who was popular with the students and the liberal media, George McGovern of South Dakota. His platform was an immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Vietnam and an increase in welfare spending. Nixon was delighted. He told his staff: `Here is a situation where the Eastern Establishment media finally has a candidate who almost totally shares their views.' The `real ideological bent of the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Time*, *Newsweek* and the three TV networks' was `on the side of amnesty [for draft—dodging], pot, abortion, confiscation of wealth (unless it is theirs), massive increases in welfare, unilateral disarmament, reduction in our defenses and surrender in Vietnam.' At last, he concluded, `the country will find out whether what the media has been standing for during these last five years really represents the majority thinking.'

The election of 11912 was not just a contest between an unelected media and the `silent majority,' though certainly the East coast media did its best to lose it for Nixon. There were many solid grounds for an administration victory. The reopening of links to China, which was Nixon's personal policy, went down well. Summiting in Moscow, which he had also practiced, was popular too. The return of many troops from Vietnam and the reduction in drafting were felt and welcomed. Inflation came down to 2.7 percent in the summer of 1972; GNP was currently growing at 6.3 percent annually; real incomes were rising by 4 percent annually; and since 11969 federal taxes had been cut by 20 percent for the average family. Stocks were rising and passed the 1,000 mark for the first time just before the election. Hence the resulting landslide. Nixon's own score of 60.7 percent of the vote was not quite as high as LBJ's in 1964, but McGovern's 29.1 percent was the lowest score ever recorded by a major party candidate. Nevertheless, this election underlined an increasing tendency in America for voters to split their tickets. While losing the presidency by a landslide the Democrats actually gained one Senate seat, thus

strengthening their hold there, and while losing twelve House seats they comfortably retained control there too. The Democrats had now dominated Congress, with brief periods of Republican rule under Truman and Eisenhower, for an entire generation, and their continued grip on the Senate, in particular, was to prove fatal to Nixon.

But at the time it was the triumphant Nixon who seemed to be in control, and his success not only humiliated the media liberals but actually frightened them. As one powerful editor put it, `There's got to be a bloodletting. We've got to make sure that nobody ever thinks of doing anything like this again.' The aim was to use the power of the press and TV to reverse the electoral verdict of 1972 which was felt to be, in some metaphorical sense, illegitimate—rather as conservative Germans, in the 1920s, had regarded the entire Weimar regime as illegitimate, or Latin American army generals, in the 1960s and 1970s, regarded
elected but radical governments as illegitimate. The media in the 1970s, rather like the Hispanic generals, felt that they were in some deep but intuitive sense the repository of the honor and conscience of the nation and had a quasi—constitutional duty to assert it in times of crisis, whatever the means or the consequences.

This view was given some spurious justification by what was coming to be called the `Imperial presidency.' That the power of the executive had been growing since Woodrow Wilson's time, with dips in the Twenties and again in the late Forties and Fifties, was undeniable. And, as already noted, the media was beginning to conceive its duty to be the critical scrutiny of an over—active presidency rather than the goading of a comatose legislature. The war in Vietnam, which necessarily increased the activity, spending power, and decision—making of the presidency, made it seem more formidable than it actually was. Kennedy, in taking over, had been shaken by the number of things over which the President had no power. This had led him to accelerate a process which was already under way—the expansion of the White House bureaucracy. Lincoln had paid for a secretary out of his own pocket. Hoover had had to struggle hard to get three. Roosevelt appointed the first `administrative assistants,' and World War Two brought a big increase in staff. All the same, the Truman White House was not overmanned, and lack of enough people probably accounted for the inadequate supervision which Truman blamed for corruption within the lower levels of the administration uncovered in 1950—2. Eisenhower reorganized the White House staff and expanded it. But it was under the Kennedy regime that the real inflation began. He had, for instance, twenty—three administrative assistants alone, and at the time of his death the White House personnel numbered 1,664. Under LBJ it jumped to forty times its size in Hoover's day. Under Nixon it rose again, to 5,395 in 1971, the cost jumping from $31 million to $71 million. There was nothing necessarily alarming in this. The administration as a whole had grown in size, enormously, and there was more for the White House to supervise. Congress, too, was growing, perhaps faster, as senators and representatives took on more 'staffers' and `research assistants'—its cost was to top a billion a year by the end of the 1970s. But the increase in security, following the Kennedy killing, made more notable and visible the portentous manner in which the presidency now carried on and moved around. Kissinger, in particular, promoted to secretary of state, liked to travel with a huge entourage, which raised eyebrows. In a curious way, the position of the presidency in the early 1970s recalled the supposed rise of royal power under George III in the 1760s, which provoked the famous House of Commons motion, `The power of the Crown has increased, is increasing and ought to be diminished.'

Nixon's reciprocal hostility to the media and his unwillingness to trust them, even more pronounced than under LBJ, persuaded some editors that `something was going on,' which fitted

into their other critical assumptions on what they termed the 'Nixon regime.' And of course something was going on. The White House was a power center engaged in all kinds of activities which would not always bear scrutiny. It necessarily engaged, in a wicked, actual world, in the *realpolitik* which was theoretically banned by an idealistic Constitution. This was a problem which had plagued presidents since Washington's day. But some presidents had taken positive pleasure in unlawful skulduggery. Bad habits had set in under FDR. He had created his own `intelligence unit,' responsible only to himself, with a staff of eleven and financed by State Department `Special Emergency' money. He used J. Edgar Hoover's FBI, the IRS, and the Justice Department to harass his enemies, especially the press and business, and to tap their phones, the mineworkers' leader John L. Lewis being one victim. FDR's use of the IRS to `get' names on his `enemies' list' was particularly scandalous and unlawful. FDR had made persistent efforts to penalize the *Chicago Tribune*, which he hated, in the courts, and to get the *New York Times* indicted for tax fraud. He even used the intelligence service to bug his wife's hotel room. Though Truman and Eisenhower, who hated underhand dealings, kept clear of clandestine activities by their staff and the CIA, as a rule, they were generally aware of them and considered that, in dealing with Soviet Russia and other totalitarian terror regimes, they were unavoidable. Kennedy and his brother Bobby positively revelled in the game, and Kennedy's chief regret was that he had not made his brother Bobby head of the CIA, to bring it under family control. Kennedy had been privy to CIA assassination plots and had been a party to the coup which led to the killing of his ally Diem, though he had opposed the murder itself. At the Justice Department, Bobby Kennedy in 1962 had agents carry out dawn raids on the homes of US Steel executives who had opposed his brother's policies. In their civil rights campaign, the Kennedy brothers exploited the federal contract system and used executive orders in housing finance (rather than legislation) to get their way. They plotted against right—wing radio and TV stations. They used the IRS to harass `enemies.' Under Kennedy and Johnson, phone—tapping increased markedly. So did `bugging' and `taping.' JFK's closest aides were stunned to learn in February 1982 that he had taped no fewer than 32.5 White House conversations. The large—scale womanizing of Martin Luther King was taped and played back to newspaper editors. The efforts made by LBJ to protect himself from the Bobby Baker scandal, already mentioned, included the unlawful use of secret government files, the IRS, and other executive devices.

Until the Nixon era, the media was extremely selective in the publicity it gave to presidential wrongdoing. Working journalists protected Roosevelt on a large number of occasions, over his love affairs and many other matters. They did the same—and more—for Kennedy. The fact that Kennedy shared a mistress, while he was president, with a notorious gangster, though known to several Washington journalists, was never published in his lifetime. In Johnson's struggle to extricate himself from the Bobby Baker mess, the *Washington Post* actually helped him to blacken his chief accuser, Senator Williams. Nixon enjoyed no such forbearance. On the contrary. The anti—Nixon campaign, especially in the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*, was continual, venomous, unscrupulous, inventive, and sometimes unlawful. This was to be expected, and though it lowered the standard of US journalism, it was something Nixon was prepared to put up with. What was more serious, and a matter which could not be ignored, was the theft, purchase, or leaking of secret material to these two papers (and others) and its subsequent appearance in print. Under the First Amendment, legislation designed to protect military security, such as the British Official Secrets Act, was generally thought to be unconstitutional. The absence of such an Act was deplored by senior American diplomatic and military officials. Kissinger was particularly concerned that leakages would imperil his Vietnam

negotiations. The appearance of secret material in newspapers shot up in spectacular fashion after Nixon assumed the presidency. In his first five months in office, twenty—one major leaks from classified National Security Council documents appeared in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*. Later that year, the CIA sent to the White House a list of forty—five newspaper articles which were regarded as serious violations of national security." It is not known how many US lives were lost as a result of these leaks, but the damage to US interests was in some cases considerable.

Then on June 13, 1971 the administration was startled by the publication of what became known as the `Pentagon papers' in the *New York Times.* This was a 7,000—word survey of American involvement in Vietnam from the end of World War Two till 1968, which had been commissioned by Robert McNamara, Defense Secretary under JFK and Johnson, and based on an archive of documents from Defense, State, the CIA, the White House, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Many of these documents were classified Top Secret. Despite this, the New York Times not only published their contents but in some cases the originals. The author of the leak was Daniel Ellsberg, a forty—year—old Rand Corporation employee who had been a researcher on the study McNamara had commissioned. The administration discovered that publication of the source notes of the Pentagon papers, if analyzed by KGB experts, could jeopardize a whole range of CIA codes and operations. One of the most sensitive of these was the CIA's device for recording the car—phone conversations of Poltiburo members. So serious were the security breaches that at one point it was thought Ellsberg was a Soviet agent.

Nixon himself thought it best to ignore these leaks but Kissinger warned him: `It shows you're a weakling, Mr President. The fact that some idiot can publish all the diplomatic secrets of this country on his own is damaging to your image, as far as the Soviets are concerned, and it could destroy our ability to conduct foreign policy. If the other powers feel that we can't control internal leaks, they will never agree to secret negotiations.' Since all the Vietnam talks, and most of those with Russia and China, were being conducted in the greatest secrecy, Kissinger had a point. An anti—leak unit was formed by one of Erlichman's assistants, Egil `Bud' Krogh, and Kissinger's administrative assistant David Young, and they recruited various helpmates, including G. Gordon Liddy, a former FBI agent now working for the justice Department and a romantic `cloak and dagger' enthusiast. They were called the Plumbers after Young's grandmother, hearing he was running a unit to stop White House leaks, wrote to say that her husband, a New York plumber, would be proud that `David is returning to the family trade.'

The Plumbers were engaged in a variety of activities of an entirely justifiable nature. But in view of the seriousness of the Ellsberg case, they got from Erlichman authorization to engage in a `covert operation' to obtain the files of Ellsberg from his psychiatrist's office. This break—in was the point at which the Nixon administration, albeit quite unknown to the President, overstepped the bounds of legality. But at least it could be claimed that the infraction was dictated by national

security. During the election campaign, however, the Plumbers broke into Democratic Party headquarters, in Washington's Watergate building, on two occasions, late May 1972 and again on June 17. The second time the Plumbers were caught. The published details of the break—in made it sound like a low—grade farce or a Mack Sennet movie. The police burst in with drawn guns, to a cry of `Don't Shoot!' and five men, three of them Cubans, emerged with their hands, wearing surgical gloves, over their heads. Nixon, who knew nothing about it and who read about it in a small item in the *Miami Herald*, while weekending in Key Biscayne, thought it some sort of joke. It was referred to as a caper.' Political espionage, even theft, had never hitherto been

taken seriously in America. This one was particularly absurd since it was already clear that Nixon was going to win easily in any case. The Plumbers seemed to have been engaged in a fishing expedition, or were breaking in just for the hell of it, and no one has ever produced a plausible political justification for the burglary, though many have tried.

But election—year dirty tricks were common. Johnson had certainly `bugged' Democratic Party headquarters during the Goldwater campaign—he loved bedtime reading, usually supplied to him by the FBI's Hoover, of transcripts from phone—taps and tapes of his political enemies. Both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, before and after Watergate, purloined material. Sometimes it was of an extremely valuable nature (the Haldeman and Kissinger memoirs, for example) and clearly involved criminal activities on someone's part. However, in the paranoid atmosphere generated by the media's anti—Nixon vendetta, anything served as ammunition to hurl against the `enemy.' The *Washington Post'*s editor, Ben Bradlee, was particularly angry, not to say hysterical, because he believed (without any warrant) that the authorities, at Nixon's insistence, were maliciously opposing the *Post'*s application for broadcasting licenses. Hence, unlike the rest of the press, the Post had Watergate stories on its front page seventy—nine times during the election and from October 20 began publication of a series of `investigative' articles seeking to make the Watergate burglary a major moral issue.

This campaign might have had no impact but the Post was lucky. A publicity—hungry judge, John Sirica, known as `Maximum John' from the severity of his sentences—and not a judge under any other circumstances likely to enjoy the approval of the liberal media—gave the burglars, when they came before him, provisional life—sentences to force them to provide evidence against members of the administration. That he was serious was made clear by the fact that he sentenced the only man who refused to comply, Liddy, to twenty years in prison, plus a fine of $40,000, for a first offense of breaking and entering, in which nothing was stolen and no resistance offered to the police. Moreover, Sirica directed that Liddy's sentence be served in a prison where he had good reason to believe Liddy's life might be in danger from inmates. This sentence was to be sadly typical of the juridical vendetta by means of which members of the Nixon administration were hounded and convicted of various offenses, chiefly obstructing justice—a notoriously easy charge to press home, granted a prejudiced judge. In some cases the accused had no alternative but to plea—bargain, pleading guilty to lesser offenses, in order to avoid the financial ruin of an expensive defense. Some of the sentences bore no conceivable relation to the gravity, or non—gravity, of the original offenses.

Thus the Watergate scandal `broke,' and allowed the machinery of Congressional investigation, where of course the Democrats enjoyed majority control, to make a frontal assault on the `Imperial presidency.' Matters were made easy for the witchhunters by the admission, on Friday, July 13, 1973, by one of the White House staff, that all Nixon's working conversations were automatically taped. This of course had been routine for many years, though few outside the White House were aware of it. Oddly enough, one of Nixon's first acts, when he moved into the White House, was to have the taping system installed by Johnson, an inveterate taper, ripped out. Then in February, worried that liberal historians of the future would misrepresent his Vietnam policy, he ordered a new system installed. His chief of staff, Haldeman, picked one which was indiscriminate and voice—activated, `the greatest single disservice a presidential aide ever performed for his chief.' These transcribed tapes, which the courts and Congressional investigators insisted Nixon hand over, were used to mount a putative impeachment of the President. The witchhunt in the Senate was led by Sam Ervin, the man who had successfully

covered up LBJ's crimes in the Bobby Baker affair, a shrewd and resourceful operator who concealed his acuteness and partisanship under a cloud of Southern wisecracking.

To make matters worse for Nixon, in a quite separate development, his Vice—President, Spiro Agnew, was accused of accepting kickbacks from contractors while governor of Maryland. There were over forty counts in the potential indictment against him, of bribe—taking, criminal conspiracy, and tax fraud, and the evidence looked solid. Agnew resigned on October 9, 1973, the justice Department offering him favorable terms for a *noli contendere* plea on one count of tax evasion. General Alexander Haig, now the White House chief of staff (Haldeman had been driven into resignation by the witchhunters) was in favor of Agnew going without fuss as he privately feared that the Democratic Congress, baying for Republican blood, would impeach both President and Vice—President, leaving the succession to the constitutional next—in—line, Speaker of the House Carl Albert, known to be a serious alcoholic under psychiatric care.

By this stage, Ervin, and the special Watergate prosecutor, Archibald Cox, had between them over 200 lawyers and special assistants working for Nixon's downfall, and feeding all the damaging material they could muster to an eager anti—Nixon media. It became difficult for the President to conduct the ordinary business of government, let alone to handle an international crisis. On October 6, 1973, a treacherous attack was launched on Israel, without warning, by Egypt and Syria, which had picked Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, for this Pearl—Harbor—type strike. Both the CIA and Israel's secret intelligence service, Mossad, were caught napping, and the results were devastating. The Israelis lost a fifth of their air force and a third of their tanks in four days, and it became necessary to resupply them. The American media did not let up in its hunt for Nixon's scalp, but he actually had to deal with the crisis and save Israel from annihilation. Nixon acted with great courage and decisiveness, cutting through redtape, military and diplomatic obstructiveness and insisting that Israel be resupplied. Within seventy—two hours an airlift was operating, delivering daily over 6,400 miles more than 1,000 tons of military supplies and equipment, and continuing with over 566 missions by the USAF over the next thirty—two days. (By contrast, the Soviet resupply of the Egyptians and Syrians never exceeded 500 tons a day, despite much shorter lines of communication.) Without the resupply, which transformed Israel's sagging morale, it is likely that the Israeli army would have been destroyed and the entire Israeli nation exterminated. Indeed it is probable that this is precisely what would have happened, had Nixon already been driven from his post at this stage. As it was, he was still around to save Israel. In many ways, October 1973, his last major international achievement, was his finest hour.

As a result of the Yom Kippur War, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) raised its charges to $11.65 a barrel, a price 387 percent higher than before the conflict. That had desirable consequences in the long run because it forced the advanced countries, including the US, which were becoming increasingly dependent on cheap Middle Eastern crude, to find alternative supplies of oil, to develop alternative sources of energy, and to set in motion energy—conservation and fuel—efficiency programs. But in the short term it set off a long period of turbulence in the international economy and an inflationary recession in the United States which made the rest of the decade difficult years for most Americans. Wholesale prices increased by 18 percent in 1974 alone, unemployment rose, reaching a postwar high of 8.5 percent in 1975, and the GDP actually fell by 2 percent in 1974 and 3 percent in 1975.

With darker times coming, the pressures on Nixon increased, and he strove desperately to combine two objects: to preserve his presidency and to do what was in the national interest. To replace the disgraced Agnew, his wish—the appointment being in his gift—was to hand the

vacant vice—presidency to John Connally, the former governor of Texas, who had been wounded at the time of Kennedy's murder. He believed Connally would make a great leader and had already settled in his mind to try his best to make him his successor in 1976. Now he wanted Connally's strength by his side during the difficult months ahead. But with the Senate in a rabid and destructive mood, it became apparent that there was no chance of Connally's nomination being confirmed. Indeed inquiries soon established that the only prominent Republican nominee likely to get through the nomination procedure was Congressman Gerald L. Ford (b. 1913) of Michigan, the Minority Leader in the House. Ford was unblemished, harmless, moderate, and loyal, and Nixon had no real hesitation in choosing him, even though he was aware that his acceptability to the Democratic majority arose from their belief that he could easily be beaten in 1976, and that his selection would therefore feed the Democrats' appetite for his own head. So Ford resigned from Congress, December 6, 1973, being the first Vice—President to be nominated by the President and confirmed by Congress, in accordance with the Twenty—fifth Amendment.

In the meantime, and while Nixon was struggling to save Israel, he had been fanged by the man he called `the viper we planted in our bosom,' Archibald Cox, special prosecutor charged with the Watergate inquiry. This novel and clumsy arrangement had been conjured up in order to preserve the separation of powers and insure the executive, under legal attack, would not unduly influence the judiciary. In fact it had the opposite effect. Cox proved much more anxious to please a Democratic Congress than to give the benefit of the doubt to a Republican chief executive. On October 12 Cox won a legal battle to secure the right of access to the tapes recording all Nixon's White House conversations. Nixon determined to fire Cox, and did so, though not without considerable obstruction from the Department of Justice.

It was at this point that the hysteria usually associated with American witchhunts took over, and all reason, balance, and consideration for the national interest was abandoned. It was an ugly moment in America's story and one which future historians, who will have no personal knowledge of any of the individuals concerned and whose emotions will not be engaged either way, are likely to judge a dark hour in the history of a republic which prides itself in its love of order and its patient submission to the rule of law. As one of Nixon's biographers put it, `the last nine months of [the] Presidency consisted of an inexorable slide towards resignation.'

Right from the start of the Watergate case, Democratic liberals in both Houses of Congress had been calling for the President's impeachment. After the Cox dismissal, and the leaking of stolen tapes to the *New York Times*, which published them, thus forestalling any possibility of a fair trial according to `due process,' impeachment became a practical possibility. Nixon had still been ahead in the polls until publication of the tape extracts, with many passages containing marks of `expletive deleted,' persuaded members of the `silent majority' that Nixon and his colleagues had habitually used swearwords and obscenities. Rumors, published in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, that the tapes, before being handed over, had been doctored and censored by Nixon's staff—rumors later proved to be unfounded—intensified these suspicions. With the polls and public apparently moving against the President, the machinery of impeachment was brought into play. The process, specified in Article I, Sections 2 and 3, of the Constitution, provides for a president to be impeached for offenses described in Article II, Section 4, as `Treason, Bribery or other High Crimes and Misdemeanors.' In practice, however, this simply means one lot of politicians sitting in judgment upon another. That is what it meant in English history, from which the system derived, and what it meant in the case of Andrew Johnson's impeachment in 1868.

The machinery of impeachment is as follows. The House Judiciary Committee, acting as a court of first instance, decides if there is a fair bill. The full House then debates, votes, and puts forward a formal accusation known as `articles of impeachment.' The Senate then tries the accused on these articles. A two—thirds majority is required for conviction, whereupon the convict is removed from office and disqualified from holding any subsequent office under the Constitution. Nixon's view from an early stage in the contest was that the House would vote for impeachment but that it would never get a two—thirds majority in the Senate. The House Judiciary Committee consisted of twenty—one Democrats and seventeen Republicans. Nixon noted that eighteen of the twenty—one Democrats on the Committee were certain to vote for impeachment, whatever the evidence, because they were hard—core partisans from the liberal wing of the party. So the Committee, as he put it, was `a stacked deck.' As it turned out, all twenty—one Democrats and six of the seventeen Republicans voted to recommend impeachment to the full House, July 27, 1974. There was no doubt that the full House, by a simple majority, would forward the charge to the Senate. There, Nixon was sure, he would at least have an opportunity to defend himself in public, and the chances of the Democrats' assembling the two—thirds majority needed to convict were not strong. Even Andrew Johnson had survived, by a single vote. Of the twelve occasions when the House had insisted on impeaching a public official, the Senate had convicted on only four.

As late as the night of July 30—31, 1974 Nixon's combative instincts told him, as he scribbled on a note—pad, `End career as a fighter.' But he had to bear in mind that the witchhunt had already lasted eighteen months and had done incalculable damage to the American system and to America's standing in the world. The impeachment process would add many months to the process, during which the executive power of the world's greatest democracy, the leader of the Western alliance, would be in suspended animation, and his own authority would be in doubt. In all these circumstances—and granted a good deal of pusillanimity among his staff and colleagues—he decided it would be in the national interest to resign, rather than stand trial as an impeached official. He was mistaken, as subsequent events showed, but his decision was neither cowardly nor dishonorable. He resigned on August 9, 1974 and Gerald Ford, now president, issued a pardon in September. This spared Nixon the ruinous cost of the his legal defense and any further harassment by his enemies, but it meant he never had an opportunity to put his case. On the other hand, he gradually reestablished his reputation as a political seer among the American political community—he never lost it abroad, where the Watergate hysteria was almost universally regarded as an exercise in American juvenilia—and became in due course one of the most respected American elder statesmen since Jefferson.

Gerald Ford had to take over in the debris of a media *putsch* which had reversed the democratic verdict of a Nixon landslide less than two years earlier, and had left a triumphalist press and a Democratic Congress which had tasted blood in possession of the stage. Instead of the Imperial presidency there was, all of a sudden—like a *deus ex machina*—an Imperial Congress. But it was an empire without an emperor. None of the men who had dragged Nixon down was in a position, or possessed the gifts, to offer responsible leadership, even of the Congressional majorities. And Ford himself was left to defend the ruined fort of the White House without a mandate. He was a man who had never sought office on a wider franchise than a Congressional district. Born in Douglas County, Nebraska, in 1913, he had moved with his family the following year to Grand Rapids, Michigan, and gone to public schools there, graduating from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in 1935, then attending Yale Law School. Like his three immediate predecessors,

he had rendered distinguished war service in the US Navy, emerging in 1946 as a lieutenant—commander, and was elected to Congress three years later. He then served, without much notice or achievement but with growing approbation from his colleagues, in twelve succeeding Congresses, emerging as minority leader by virtue of seniority and lack of enemies. Indeed, if Ford had enemies, they never made themselves visible. What he had was critics, usually of his intelligence. LBJ dismissed him as `So dumb he can't fart and chew gum at the same time.' In fact Ford was not dumb, but he was unassertive, sometimes inarticulate, and notably unacademic. He had been an outstanding athlete at Ann Arbor and preferred to discuss politics in terms of football, thus inspiring another cruel LBJ jibe: `The trouble with Jerry Ford is that he used to play football without a helmet.' He had trouble with his inner ear, as had Mamie Eisenhower. Whereas Mrs Eisenhower's occasional lack of balance led the media to assume she had taken to drink, in Ford's case it produced much—photographed stumbles, which raised derision among the public. But there was nothing wrong with Ford's brain. He had, indeed, a remarkable memory, was able to record the face, name, occupation, and often other data about everyone he ever met. This did not make him a great president, but it made him countless friends, often humble ones.

Ford was much sustained by his wife Betty, a vigorous and outspoken lady, a former model and dancer known as the `Martha Graham of Grand Rapids.' While Ford made a nervous president, Mrs Ford took to the White House with enthusiasm, a marked contrast to the retiring Pat Nixon, and she reversed the secrecy of the Nixon White House by a display of spontaneous openness, telling the world about her mastectomy, her drinking problems, and her psychiatric treatment. On CBS TV's *60 Minutes* program in August 1975 she gave a spectacularly successful and frank interview about a series of issues, such as abortion, premarital sex, and other controversial matters, which infuriated some moral conservatives but had the effect of reassuring many more that humanity and normalcy had returned to the White House. Among other things, she was the first President's wife since Grace Coolidge to share not only a bedroom but a double bed with the President in the White House.

But there was no normalcy elsewhere in Washington. The fall of Nixon was made the occasion for a radical shift in the balance of power back towards the legislature. Some movement in this direction was, perhaps, overdue. Presidential over—activism is always a constitutional vice, and one from which even Nixon, despite his fundamental conservatism, sometimes suffered. But in the event the swing proceeded much too far in the opposite direction, at heavy cost to America and still more to the world. The attack on the executive's traditional powers by Congress began even before Nixon's departure. On November 7 Congress enacted, over the President's veto, the War Powers Resolution, which required presidents to inform Congress within forty—eight hours if they sent troops overseas or significantly reinforced troops already serving; and if Congress failed to endorse such actions within sixty days the President would be obliged to cease such operations (unless he certified that an additional thirty days were needed to make the withdrawal safely).

Further limitations of presidential foreign policy were imposed by the Jackson—Vanik and Stevenson Amendments of 1973—4. In July—August 1974 Congress paralyzed the President's handling of the Cyprus crisis. In the autumn of 1974 it imposed restrictions on the use of the CIA. In 1975 it effectively hamstrung the President's policy in Angola, thus producing a civil war which led to the deaths of one—fifth of the population and whose effects are still being felt at the end of the 20th century. Later that year it passed the Arms Export Control Act, removing the President's discretion in the supply of arms—a piece of legislation warmly welcomed by the

expanding Soviet and French arms—export industries and by the nascent Chinese one. Congress used financial controls to limit severely the system of `presidential agreements' with foreign powers, over 6,300 of which had been concluded from 1946 to 1974, as opposed to only 411 treaties, which required Congressional approval. It reinforced its aggressive restrictions on presidential authority by enabling no fewer than seventeen Senatorial and sixteen House committees to supervise aspects of foreign policy and by expanding its own expert staff to over 3,000 (the House International Relations Committee staff tripled, 1971—7), to monitor White House activities. By the late 1970s it was calculated that there were now no fewer than seventy limiting amendments on the President's conduct of foreign policy. It was even argued that a test of the War Powers Act would reveal that the President was no longer commander—in—chief, and that the decision whether or not American troops could be kept abroad or withdrawn might have to be left to the Supreme Court.

Ford was obliged to look on helplessly while such freedom as a decade of effort by America had secured for the peoples of Indochina was removed step by step. As US military aid to South Vietnam tailed off from 1973, the balance of armed power shifted decisively to the Communist regime in the North. By the end of the year the North had achieved a two—to—one superiority and, in defiance of all the accords carefully worked out by Nixon and Kissinger, launched a general invasion. Bound hand and foot by Congress, Ford felt powerless to act and simply made verbal protests. In January 1975 the whole of central Vietnam had to be evacuated and a million terrified refugees fled towards Saigon. In an appeal to Congress, Ford warned: `American unwillingness to provide adequate assistance to allies fighting for their lives could seriously affect our credibility throughout the world as an ally.' Congress did nothing. At his news conference on March 26 Ford again pleaded with Congress, warning of `a massive shift in the foreign policies of many countries and a fundamental threat ... to the security of the United States.' Congress paid no attention. Four weeks later, on April 21, the Vietnamese government abdicated. Marine helicopters lifted American officials, and a few Vietnamese allies, from the rooftop of the US embassy in Saigon, an image of flight and humiliation etched on the memories of countless Americans who watched it on TV. It was indeed the most shameful defeat in the whole of American history. The democratic world looked on in dismay at this abrupt collapse of American power, which had looked so formidable only two years before.

But it was the helpless people of the region who had to pay the real price. Nine days after the last US helicopter clattered out to sea, Communist tanks entered the city of Saigon, and the secret trials and shootings of America's abandoned allies began almost immediately. All over Indochina, the Communist elites which had seized power by force began their programs of `social engineering.' The best—documented is the 'ruralization' conducted by the Communist Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, who entered the capital Phnom Penh in mid—April, the US embassy having been evacuated on the 12th. The atrocities began on the 17th. The object of the plan was to telescope into one terrifying year the social changes carried out in Mao's China over a quartercentury. Details of the plan had been obtained by the State Department expert Kenneth Quinn, who had circulated it in a report dated February 20, 1974. Members of Congress were made well aware of what they were permitting to happen. But they averted their gaze. Between April 1975 and the beginning of 1977, the Marxist—Leninist ideologues ruling Cambodia ended the lives of 1,200,000 people, a fifth of the population."' Comparable atrocities took place in Laos, and during Communist efforts to unify Vietnam by force, 1975—7, following which Vietnam invaded Cambodia and occupied Phnom Penh on January 7, 1979. Laos was likewise occupied by Vietnamese troops. By 1980 Vietnam had over i million in its armed forces, next to

Cuba's the largest, per capita, in the world. Communist colonial rule inevitably provoked a return to guerrilla warfare in the countryside, which continued throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s.

Unable to do anything in Southeast Asia, Ford, who was desperate to achieve some success which would help him get elected in 1976, tried hard to revitalize the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, begun by Nixon and Kissinger in 1972, in conjunction with the Soviet dictator Leonid Brezhnev. Nixon was careful to call these negotiations `talks' not a `treaty.' SALT I, as it was called, succeeded in reaching agreement between Russia and America to reduce the number of their offensive intercontinental ballistic missiles and defensive antiballistic missiles, though not MIRVs (Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles), the Senate approving 88—2. Ford's attempt to push on to SALT II met resistance when he tried to link the arms reductions to Soviet treatment of Jews. All he had to report was a minor agreement known as the Helsinki Accords, whereby Russia renounced the right to use force within its satellite empire, though it had the demerit that it appeared to recognize the *status quo* in eastern Europe. As his running mate for the election, Ford—who got the nomination simply in the absence of a major contender—recruited Senator Robert Dole of Kansas (b. 1923), already regarded as a Congressional `old timer' and reputed to be witty, though this did not emerge during the campaign.

The Democrats, having destroyed a strong and able president, had no masterful alternative to offer in exchange; no one much at all, in fact. In the second half of the 1970s, not surprisingly, Washington insiders were generally held in low regard, and against this background a Democratic `outsider,' Jimmy Carter, governor of Georgia (b. 1924) was chosen. Carter inherited a peanut farm and did well at it (or so it was said), but his claim to notice was that he represented the new generation of moderate Southern politicians who had accepted—more or less—the civil rights revolution and learned to live with it. `Jimmy,' as he liked to be called, had a big smile, and his slogan, endlessly repeated, was `I'll never lie to you.' The truth is he had been recruited and packaged by a clever Atlanta advertising executive, Gerald Rafshoon, who had brushed `Jimmy' up and left out of the package inconvenient accessories, such as his no—good drunken brother, and the thrusting ambitions of his strong—minded wife, Rosalynn. The polls, which had been heavily anti—Ford, moved against Carter during the campaign and if it had lasted another fortnight it is possible that Ford might have won the presidency in his own right. As it was Carter scraped home with a vote of 40,828,587 to 39,147,613, and an electoral college majority of 297 to 241. He won the presidency by an unconvincing margin against perhaps the weakest incumbent in history and became a still weaker one. The fact that Congress was Democratic too seemed to make little difference, and the succession of American reverses abroad continued.

Carter actually added to American weakness by well—meaning but ill—thought—through ventures. One of them was his `human rights' policy, based on the Helsinki Accords, under which those who signed them undertook to end violations of human rights everywhere. Carter's object was to force Soviet Russia to liberalize its internal policy, and especially to abolish its imprisonment of political prisoners in psychiatric hospitals. But the consequences were quite different. Within Russia and its satellites, the Helsinki Accords were ignored and groups set up to monitor them were broken up and their members arrested. In the West, America found itself pitted against some of its oldest allies. A human rights lobby grew up within the administration, taking over a whole section of the State Department, which worked actively to enforce the Accords. Thus, it played a major role in the overthrow of the Somoza regime in Nicaragua. An assistant secretary, Voron Vaky, announced on behalf of the US government: `No negotiation,

mediation or compromise can be achieved any longer with a Somoza government. The solution can only begin with a sharp break with the past.' The `sharp break' took the form, in 1979, of the overthrow of Somoza, a faithful if distasteful ally of America, and his replacement by a Marxist and pro—Soviet regime, whose attitude to human rights was even more contemptuous and which campaigned openly for the overthrow of America's allies in Guatemala, El Salvador, and elsewhere in Central America. In September 1977 Brazil reacted to State Department criticisms of its internal policies by cancelling all its four remaining defense agreements with the US, two of which went back to 1942. Argentina too was alienated.

The next year the State Department's Bureau of Human Rights played a significant part in undermining the position of another old US ally, the Shah of Iran, whose pro—Western regime was overthrown by orchestrated street—mobs in 1979. It was replaced by a Moslem fundamentalist terror regime, which swiftly accumulated an unprecedented record of gross human rights abuses and characterized the US as the `Great Satan.' On January 20, 1980, in an attempt to retrieve the situation in Iran, Carter publicly proclaimed what he hoped would be known as the `Carter Doctrine,' an assertion that the oil reserves of the Persian Gulf were of vital interest to the US and that it would be justified in intervening with military force to prevent domination of the region from outside (that is, by Soviet Russia). This declaration, noted by Congress, came in useful in August 1990, under President Bush, when Iraq invaded Kuwait, but at the time the only attempt by the Carter administration to use military power in the area, an ill—planned helicopter operation to rescue American hostages held by the Iran government, which took place in April 1980, ended in a humiliating failure.

During the 1970s the Cold War spread to virtually every part of the globe and was marked by two developments: the contraction of US naval power, and the expansion of Soviet naval power. In 1945, the United States had 5,718 naval vessels in active service, including 98 aircraft carriers, 23 battleships, 72 cruisers, and over 700 destroyers and escorts. As late as June 1968, the US had 976 naval vessels in commission. But in the 1970s the American fleet shrank rapidly to thirteen carriers and their escorts. While America became a major importer not only of oil but of chrome, bauxite, manganese, nickel, tin, and zinc, and therefore became ever more dependent on supply by sea, its ability to keep sea—lanes open declined sharply. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, in his budget report for 1977, noted that the `current [US] fleet can control the North Atlantic sea—lanes to Europe' but only after `serious losses' to shipping. The `ability to operate in the eastern Mediterranean would be, at best, uncertain.' The Pacific fleet could `hold open the sea—lanes to Hawaii and Alaska' but `would have difficulty in protecting our lines of communication into the Western Pacific.' He warned that in a global war America would be `hard pressed to protect allies like Japan and Israel or to reinforce NATO.' This was a transformation from 1951, when Admiral Carney, Commander of NATO forces in Southern Europe, had dismissed Soviet naval power in the Mediterranean: `He said it was possible there were a few "maverick" Soviet submarines in the Mediterranean and they might be able to push in some others in preparation for a war. But they couldn't support them long.'

The big change in Soviet naval policy came in 1962, when the Kremlin, reflecting on the Cuban missile crisis, decided to expand its navy greatly. Over the next fourteen years Soviet Russia built a total of 1,323 ships of all classes (against 302 American ships built), including 120 major surface combat ships. By the same date Russia had accumulated 188 nuclear submarines, 46 of them carrying strategic missiles. By the late 1970s the first genuine Soviet carriers appeared. Even before this, during the 1973 Yom Kippur War, the position of the American fleet in the Mediterranean theater was described by its Commander as `very uncomfortable,' an

expression not used since the destruction of Japanese naval power. By this point Soviet naval power, already predominant in the Northeast Atlantic and Northwest Pacific, was ready to move into the South Atlantic and Indian oceans. This was the background to the Soviet descent on black Africa in the late 1970s, often using Cuban forces as surrogates. In December 1975, under Soviet naval escort, the first Cuban troops landed in Angola. In 1976 they moved into Ethiopia, now in the Soviet camp, and into Central and East Africa. By the end of the 1970s there were ten African states, under Soviet `protection,' which were proclaiming themselves Marxist—Leninist.

While the Carter administration was adept at damaging friends and allies, it failed to develop any coherent response to this extension of the Cold War. Under Carter, there was a triangular tug of war between his Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, his security advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and his Georgian assistant, Hamilton Jordan, much of which was conducted in public, leaving aside the freelance activities of brother Billy Carter, who acted as a paid lobbyist to the anti—American Libyan government. The only point on which Carter's men agreed was on America's declining ability to control events. Cyrus Vance thought that to `oppose Soviet or Cuban involvement in Africa would be futile.' `The fact is,' he added, `that we can no more stop change than Canute could still the waters.' Brzezinski insisted, `the world is changing under the influence of forces no government can control.' Carter himself said America's power to influence events was `very limited.' Feeling itself impotent, the Carter administration took refuge in cloudy metaphor, for which Brzezinski had a talent. Vietnam, he said, had been `the Waterloo of the Wasp Elite' and no such intervention could ever again be undertaken by America. `There are many different axes of conflict in the world,' he noted, `[and] the more they intersect, the more dangerous they become.' West Asia was `the arc of crisis.' But `the need is not for acrobatics but for architecture.'

It was not that Carter was incapable of doing things when he exerted himself. From September 6 to 17, 1978, he hosted a summit between Egyptian and Israeli leaders at Camp David at which agreements were reached which led to a formal Egyptian—Israeli treaty in March 1979, the first and most crucial step towards bringing peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors. This was a notable achievement, but it remained unique in Carter's record. Most of the time he appeared hyperactive but curiously supine in action. An aide protested on his behalf: `Look, this guy is at his desk every day by 6 A.M.,' to which the reply came: `Yes, and by 8 A.M. he has already made several serious errors of judgment.' Things might have been better, looking back on it, had Rosalynn been in charge. She was ubiquitous. The *Washington Star* reported that in her first fourteen months in the White House she had visited eighteen national and twenty—seven American cities, held 259 private and 50 public meetings, made fifteen major speeches, held twenty—two press conferences, given thirty—two interviews, attended eighty—three official receptions, and held twenty—five meetings with special groups in the White House, and was said to be `trying to take on all the problems we have.' What it did not report, though it emerged after she and her husband left the White House, was that she occasionally attended Cabinet meetings.

Behind the faltering of American power in the 1970s, and giving it a psychological overtone, was the consciousness of the relative economic decline of the United States. During the early stages of the Cold War, the US had been sustained by its consciousness of the `Baby Boom,' which began in 1945 when the soldiers returned from abroad, and continued through most of the 1950s: the `Baby Boomers' were to be a new and infinitely numerous generation of an extra 50 million well—fed and well—educated and trained Americans, able to take on the world. Campaigning for election in 1952, Truman had been able to say, with general agreement, `This is

the greatest nation on earth, I think. The greatest nation in history, let's put it that way. We have done things that no other nation in the history of the world has done' (Salem, Oregon, June 11, 1952). The figures could not lie. In metals, the United States produced as much as the combined output of Canada, the Soviet Union, and Chile, in fuel minerals as much as Russia, Germany, Britain, Venezuela, Japan, France, Poland, Iran, the Netherlands, India, Burma, Belgium, and Luxembourg. US production of minerals was about four times larger than that of Russia, the second—largest producer. The symbol of these years was Pan—American Airways, the world—conquering airline which in June 1947 inaugurated the first round—the—world regular flight of 25,003 miles New York—New York, and eleven years later, in October 1958, brought in the first big—jet 707 regular service. America did well throughout the 195os and into the 1960s. In 1968, the year when LBJ first became painfully aware of the financial pressure on the world's richest power, US industrial production was still more than a third (34 percent) of total world production. The American GDP, which had doubled during World War Two, doubled again by 1957, and yet again by 1969. That was why President Nixon, on December 15, 1970, was able to celebrate the registering, by the Commerce Department's 'GDP Clock,' of a 'trillion—dollar economy,' which moved at the rate of $2,000 a second.

But by the following year, the US proportion of world production had fallen to under 30 percent, and Nixon was warning: `Twenty—five years ago, we were unchallenged in the world, militarily and economically. As far as competition was concerned, there was no one who could challenge us. But now that has changed.' America's economic leadership was `jeopardized.' This was reflected in the inability of America to continue managing the world's international monetary system, which it had done since 1945. In 1971 the Nixon administration lost or abandoned control of what was happening. Two years later, in March 1973, Nixon cut the link between gold and the dollar, and thereafter most major currencies floated. The float revealed the weakness of the dollar, which lost 40 percent of its value against the Deutschmark between February and March 1973.

America added to its problems of competing successfully in the world by a continuing spate of regulatory legislation passed by Congress in the 196os and 1970s. This followed the remarkable success of Rachel Carson's book *The Silent Spring* (1962), which first drew public attention to the long—term dangers of industrial pollution and the poisoning of the environment. In 1964 came the Multiple Use Act and the Land and Water Act; in 1965 the Water Pollution Act and the Clean Air Act; in 1966 the Clean Water Restoration Act. Then came the `Conservation Congress' of 1968 and a whole series of gigantic Acts which attempted to impose what was called 'Ecotopia' on the US: the Environmental Protection Act, the Toxic Substances Control Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Clean Air Amendments Act, and a series of Food and Drug Acts. By 1976 it was calculated that compliance with the new legislation was costing US businesses $63 billion a year plus a further $3 billion to the taxpayer for maintaining regulatory services. By 1979 total costs had risen to $100 billion annually.

Much of this legislation was not only well meaning but desirable. But it had a serious effect on the productivity of US business. In the coal industry, for example, where production had been 19.9 tons per worker per day in 1969, it had slipped, by the time the full effects of the 1969 Coal—Mine Health and Safety Act had been felt in 1976, to 13.6 tons, a fall of 32 percent. In 1975, over the whole of American industry, productivity was 1.4 percent lower than it otherwise would have been as a result of meeting federal pollution and job—safety regulations.' As a result, in the decade 1967—77, productivity in American manufacturing industry grew by only 27 percent, about the same as in Britain (regarded, by this time, as the `Sick Man of Europe'),

while the corresponding figure for West Germany was 70 percent, for France 72 percent, and for Japan 107 percent. In some years in the 1970s, American productivity actually fell. Detailed analysis of this stagnation or decline in American dynamism suggested the causes were mainly political: failure to control the money supply, excessive taxation, but chiefly government intervention and regulation.

There were many other disturbing indicators. With growing competition from Europe, Japan, and other Far Eastern manufacturers, America's share of total world production of motor vehicles fell in the decade 1972—81 from 32 to 19 percent; in steel it dropped from 20 to 22 percent; in manufacturing as a whole the US share slid to 26 percent by the mid—1970s, 24 percent by the end of the decade, and 20 percent in the early 1980s. The standard of living, measured by total output per person, gave the US an annual figure of $6,000 by 1973; but Switzerland's figure was then $7,000, and the US was also behind Sweden, Denmark, and West Germany. By the end of the 1970s it was behind Kuwait too, and it fell behind Japan in the 1980s. The decline in America's once—strong balance of payments position, a feature of the 1960s and 1970s, reflected the fact that, by the early 1970s, America was importing nearly half its oil and large quantities of tin, bauxite, diamonds, platinum, and cobalt, as well as a growing percentage of its manufactured goods, not only consumer durables but machine—tools. The relative economic decline continued uninterruptedly during the 1970s.

However, there was a pendant to this picture of relative decline which, in time, proved to be more significant than the main image. The declining dynamism of the US economy observable in the 1960s and 1970s was very much a regional phenomenon largely confined to the Northeast, the old manufacturing core, the `smokestack industries.' Beginning in the 1920s (as we have seen), encouraged by the New Deal's state capitalism, and hugely accelerated by World War Two, was the rise of America's `Pacific Economy.' In the years after 1960 this was at last followed by the modern industrial development of the Old South and the border states. This rise of new industry was accompanied and made possible by a movement of people, not unlike the wagon—trail march to the West in the 19th century, in search of jobs and (not least) better weather—a move from the 'frost—belt' to the 'sunbelt.'

The shift of America's center of gravity, both demographic and economic, from the Northeast to the Southwest, was one of the most important changes of modern times. In the 1940s, the geographer E. L. Ullman located the core of the US economy in the Northeast. Though only 8 percent of the total land area, it had 42 percent of the population and 68 percent of manufacturing employment. The pattern remained apparently stable through most of the 1950s. The geographer H. S. Perloff, writing in 1960, saw what he called the `manufacturing belt' as `still the very heart of the national economy.' But even as he wrote the balance was changing. In 1940—60 the North still gained population (2 million), but this was entirely accounted for by low—income, mostly unskilled blacks from the South. It was already suffering a net loss of whites; this soon became an absolute loss. The change came in the 1960s and was pronounced by the 1970s. In the years 1970—7, the Northeast lost 2.4 million by migration; the Southwest gained 3.4 million, most of them skilled whites. The shift from frost— to sun—belt was reinforced by rising energy prices, as the 1980 census showed. Regional variations in income, once heavily in favor of the old `core area,' converged, then moved in favor of the Southwest. Investment followed population. The core area's share of manufacturing employment fell from 66 percent in 1950 to 50 percent in 1977. The Southwest's rose from 20 to 30 percent.

The economic—demographic shift brought changes in political power and philosophy. Since the mid—1960s, all America's elected presidents have come from the South and West: Johnson

and Bush from Texas, Nixon and Reagan from California, Carter from Georgia, and Clinton from Arkansas. The only Northerner, Ford, was never elected. (It is arguable that Bush was not a genuine Texan, but he claimed to be, in itself significant.) When Kennedy was elected in 1960, the frost—belt had 286 electoral college votes to the sun—belt's 245. By 1980 the sunbelt led by four and by 1984 by twenty—six. The shift marked the end of the old FDR interventionist coalition, dominant for two generations, and the emergence of a South—West coalition, more closely attuned to the free market. Nixon's landslide victory of 1972 was a foretaste of the political consequences of the shift, though that was overshadowed by Watergate and its consequences. But the election of the Georgian Jimmy Carter in 1976 was another indicator. The idea of a weak candidate from a smallish Southern state making it to the White House would have been inconceivable only ten years before. In 1964, however, California ousted New York as America's biggest state. By 1990 it had 29,760,021 people, against 17,990,450 in New York. By 1990, again, Texas had become the country's third—largest state, with 16,986,510 people (it became the second—largest in 1994), and Florida the fourth—largest with 12,937,926. In 1980, for the first time in American history, the election was between a man from the West, Ronald Reagan, and a man from the South, Jimmy Carter.

Ronald Reagan, born in 1911, came from Tampico, Illinois, and was the son of a hard—drinking, wisecracking, intermittently unemployed shoe—salesman. He graduated from Eureka College in 1932, worked briefly as a sports broadcaster, then moved to California, where he prospered in the movies as `Mister Norm.' He was a true B—movie star, right at the top of the second grade, a `quick study,' always punctual on set, easygoing, obedient to the director, friendly to fellow—actors, a bankable name.", But after the war (during which he worked in government movies) a near—fatal bout of pneumonia, a painful divorce from the actress Jane Wyman, a growing disgust with some aspects of the movie industry, formed during his service in a union representing actors, combined to persuade him to start a new career, a spokesman for General Electric. This in turn led him into politics and changed his mind on the subject of what politics was about. He was a natural Democrat who had voted four times for FDR and in some metaphysical ways he remained a New Dealer. But `by 1960,' as he wrote, `I realized the real enemy wasn't Big Business, it was Big Government.' In 1966 he was elected Republican governor of California, the number—one US state with the world's seventh—largest economy, was triumphantly reelected, and established himself as a reliable, cautious, and effective administrator. Despite this, and his proven record as a vote—winner, Reagan was ignored by the Republican establishment in the post—Nixon era, notwithstanding their poverty of talent. He had to fight his way every inch to the Republican nomination in 1980. The East coast media did not hate him, as they had hated Nixon (and Johnson), they simply despised and dismissed him as a `maverick,' an `outsider,' a `California nut—case,' an `extremist,' `another Goldwater,' and so on.

As late as August 1980 most Washington pundits agreed that Carter, as incumbent, would have no difficulty in disposing of the challenger. In fact Carter became the first elected President to be defeated since Hoover in 1932. Reagan beat Carter by a huge margin, 43,904,153 to 35,483,883, and this was all the more remarkable as John B. Anderson, an Illinois congressman who had opposed Reagan for the Republican nomination, ran as an independent and received 5,720,000 popular votes. Reagan carried the electoral college by 489 votes to Carter's 49. The fact is, Reagan was one of the great vote—getters of American history, a man who could win over the majority among both sexes, all age groups, virtually all occupation and income groups,

and in all parts of the Union. The only categories where he failed to make majority scores were blacks and Jews. In 1984, against Carter's Vice—President, Walter Mondale, who was running with a woman vice—presidential candidate, for the first time—Representative Geraldine Ferraro of New York—Reagan scored an even more remarkable victory. He carried all states, except Mondale's home—state, Minnesota (and the District of Columbia), winning a 525—13 majority in the college, and an overwhelming popular plurality, 54,455,074 votes to Mondale's 37,577,185.

Reagan looked, spoke, and usually behaved as if he had stepped out of a Norman Rockwell *Saturday Evening Post* cover from the 1950s. More important, he actually thought like a Rockwell archetype. He had very strong, rooted, and unshakeable views about a few central issues of political and national life, which he expressed in simple and homely language. He saw America as the Pilgrim Fathers had, as a `City on the Hill,' as the Founding Fathers had, as the ideal republic, as Lincoln had, as `the last, best hope for mankind,' and as Theodore Roosevelt had, as a land where adventure was still possible and any determined and brave man could aspire to anything. He also saw America as (in his view) FDR had, where those who had much gave to those who had less, but he saw it too as Andrew Jackson had, as a federation of states where Washington was (as it were) merely the first among equals.

Reagan had been inspired, in his 1980 campaign, by the success of Margaret Thatcher in Britain, who had set about reducing the size and role of the state by her campaign of curbing expenditure and taxation and regulation, and by her privatization of the state sector. Like Thatcher, Reagan saw himself as a radical from the right, a conservative revolutionary who had captured the citadel of the state but, like Thatcher, still treated it as an enemy town. Both these remarkable figures of the 198os replaced the doubts and indecisions of the 1970s with `conviction politics,' homely ideologies based on the Judeo—Christian ethics of the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, reinforced by such secular tracts as Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, the writings of Jefferson and John Stuart Mill, and the arguments of 20th—century conservatives like Milton Friedman, Friedrich A. Hayek, and Karl Popper. But whereas Thatcher had read the last three in the original, Reagan had absorbed them in filtered—down versions, via *Reader's Digest* and other popular publications. He was in fact a great and constant reader, though not in the sense academics recognize.

Reagan was sometimes confused in his thinking. But then he knew he was confused and wisecracked about it, saying: `Sometimes our right hand doesn't know what our far—right hand is doing.' That was where he differed from Thatcher. Like Lincoln, he possessed the secret weapon of the homely politician: humor. Quite incapable of the majesty Lincoln brought to public papers and speeches, Reagan nonetheless had a way with words which was far from negligible in terms of the political dividends it earned. One writer on the presidency has noted: `Style is the President's habitual way of performing his three political roles, rhetoric, personal relations, and homework.' In this sense, Reagan had a consistent and coherent style, that of light comedy, a comedy which reassured all and threatened none, which was quotidian, ubiquitous, and all—purpose. As one observer put it, he was `the Johnny Carson of politics, the Joker—in—Chief of the United States.' And whereas, in Lincoln's case, presidential jokes were resented by many as coarse, unbecoming, and vulgar, with Reagan they seemed natural. His childhood had been unhappy and insecure; the family had moved ten times. Their refuge was joking. Reagan got his one—liners from his father, his ability to get them across with masterful timing from his mother, a frustrated actress. He drew a lot and thought in visual terms. He had ambitions, at one time, to be a cartoonist. His omnivorous reading in homely quarters, and his excellent memory,

allowed him to build up an extraordinary stock of jokes, metaphors, funny facts, proverbs, and sayings, added to assiduously during his Hollywood and PR years, and polished and categorized for service on all occasions. He liked to have on his desk a jar of jelly—beans which he could delve into and pop into his mouth to calm himself down, and he likewise delved into his formidable joke—arsenal, which never failed him. It is no accident that his two favorite authors were Mark Twain and Damon Runyon, both of whom used humor to make acceptable the agonies of life. Reagan worked not through logic and statistics but through metaphor, analogy, and jokes, and he was good not just at listening but at interpreting body language. Reagan was never afraid of seeking the presidency or enjoying it. He knew he had been a successful governor of a huge state when everyone said he would fail and that he had won the presidency when most people thought it impossible. He was a very secure person, and that (as with Lincoln) enabled him to joke about serious things.

Observers first became aware of the power of Reagan's humor when, during the election, he had a debate with Carter in New York. This was and is heartland territory for a Democratic candidate but Reagan nonetheless won the encounter hands down. He destroyed Carter in the TV debates with a simple aside to the viewers: `There he goes again.' His 1980 proposed budget plan was the work of the outstanding economist Alan Greenspan, later chairman of the Federal Reserve, but it was Reagan who gave it the formulation which aroused the public: 'A recession is when your neighbor loses his job. A depression is when you lose yours. And recovery is when Jimmy Carter loses his.' Once in the White House, Reagan used jokes to make both himself and everyone else feel at home. Like Lincoln, he used jokes to narrow the daunting psychological gap between the President and the rest. He knew he had been blessed with common sense and he felt his being in politics was in pursuit of a serious purpose—so let them laugh. He laughed with them. When a reporter asked him to autograph an old studio picture showing him with the chimpanzee Bonzo, Reagan did so and wrote, `I'm the one with the watch.' He regularly joked about not only his age and stupidity but his memory lapses, his second—rate movies, his mad ideologies, and supposed domination by his much cleverer wife—all the areas of vulnerability. He joked about his laziness: `It's true hard work never killed anyone but I figure, why take the chance?' He was not exactly lazy, in fact, but he was careful of himself and conserved his energy: he spent 345 days of his presidency at his 688—acre property, the Rancho del Cielo, which he had owned in the Santa Ynez Mountains, northwest of California, since 1974. That was one year out of eight in total. He made many of his most important decisions there and felt, probably correctly, that it was in the national interest to use the ranch as much as he did.

Many of his jokes were learned by heart or even written for him. But some of his best one—liners were spontaneous. Of a mob of peace—protestors: `Their signs say make love not war, but they didn't look as if they could do either.' To a bearded man who shouted, `We are the future,' Reagan replied, `I'll sell my bonds.' When he was shot and nearly died in 1981, he let out a string of one—liners. Thus, to his wife Nancy, `Honey, I forgot to duck,' a recycling of Jack Dempsey's famous 1926 joke about his defeat by Gene Tunney. Just before being wheeled into the operating theater, he said to the doctors, `Please tell me you're all Republicans,' and when he was in the recovery room he said to the nurses, paraphrasing W. C. Fields during the wagon—train fight against the Sioux: `All in all, I'd rather be in Philadelphia.' He had a euphemism for his frequent naps: `Personal staff time' or `Staff time with Bonzo.'

His jokes often expressed his fundamental ideas and helped to pass off his ignorance in areas solemn people thought vital, such as economics. But most of his anti—economist, anti—lawyer, and anti—clerical jokes were addressed directly to economists, lawyers, and clergy. He liked

cheering—up as well as put—'em—at—their—ease jokes. `How many are dead in Arlington Cemetery?,' a question which evoked bafflement and was
answered by `They all are.' He told the 1984 Gridiron Dinner, `I'm not worried about the deficit—it's big enough to take care of itself.' One of his great strengths was that he was not ashamed to ask simple questions. Thus: `What makes the Blue Mountains blue?' (A lot of people want to ask this but fear to reveal their ignorance.) He asked Paul Volcker, chairman of the Fed, `Why do we need the Federal Reserve at all?' Volcker, six feet seven—and—a—half—half a foot taller than Reagan—sagged in his chair and was `speechless for a minute.' But that was exactly the kind of question Andrew Jackson asked. Reagan used questions to disarm or sidetrack issues he felt overwhelming. Thus, asked about the `Butter Mountain,' he replied: `478 million pounds of butter? Does anyone know where we can find 478 million pounds of popcorn?'

Sometimes Reagan forgot names or misremembered them or became confused. He called the Liberian leader, Samuel K. Doe, `Chairman Mao.' He thought the former British Defense Minister, Denis Healey, was an ambassador. He announced, at the White House, `It gives me great pleasure to welcome Prime Minister Lee and Mrs Lee to Singapore.' The first time the author met him he said, `Good to see you again, Paul.' He relied a lot on his cue cards. But he was humble and cooperative with his staff, as he had been as an actor. He regarded the events in his daily diary schedule as stage directions he must obey. He often took more trouble with ordinary citizens than he did with important people. One of his staff, Anne Higgins, selected letters for him to read from his huge mail. Like Jefferson, he replied to as many as he could. He responded to hard—luck stories with advice and sometimes a small personal check. Some of his letters to humble people are wonderfully well phrased, and treasured. He also made frequent phone calls to the relatives of victims, wounded members of the forces, or policemen and the like. He was the `Great Comforter.' Reagan was accessible to people who never met him, and they felt it. On the other hand, the closer people got to him, the less they knew him. He was an affable monarch, but still a monarch. Seen really close, he was as unresponsive and remote as Louis XIV. Some infighting did take place in his court, but usually well outside his earshot. No one was anxious to disturb his placidity. His best biographer sums up: `He was a happy president, pleased with his script, his cue cards and his supporting cast.'

The new President's self—confidence, and confidence in America, soon communicated itself. It was not long before the American public began n sense that the dark days of the 1970s were over, and that the country was being led again. There were limits to what Reagan could do to get the country back on the rails. The Democrats still controlled Congress and would not cut welfare spending. During his first term, spending still increased annually by 3.7 percent. But at least it was less than the 5 percent annual increase under Carter. At the same time, Reagan made good his promise to cut taxes. The Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981, the work of Congressman Jack Kemp and Senator William Roth, with Reagan's full backing, reduced the highest tax rate to 50 percent and included across—the—board tax reductions of 25 percent. There were other reductions in taxes on capital gains, estates, and gifts. It was followed by the Tax Reform Act of 1986, which greatly simplified the entire tax structure. This success, together with a massive program of deregulation, acted as a potent stimulant to business. Reagan took over in January 1981 and by the beginning of 1983 the nation was in full recovery. The growth continued throughout Reagan's second term, then into his successor's and well into the 1990s, the longest continual expansion in American history. Inflation, which had been 12.5 percent under Carter,

fell to 4.4 percent in 1988. Unemployment fell to 5.5 percent as 18 million new jobs were created. Interest rates were down too.

Nevertheless, there has been some confusion about the economic recovery of the Reagan years and it is worth while to go into a little detail to sort it out. We have already noted the rapid, indeed alarming growth of social security spending. The sinister aspect of this growth was that it was largely unfunded, and had been from the start. That was FDR's doing. The first social security check was issued to Ida Fuller of Brattleboro, Vermont in 1940. It was for $22.54. At the time she got this check she had paid in only $22.00 in social security taxes. By the time she drew her last check in 1974, she had received $20,944 all except $22.00 unfunded. No wonder Reagan called it 'an inter—generational Ponzi game.' It was a kind of pyramid fraud, played on youth. Congress knowingly promoted the fraud. Between 11950 and 11972 Congress, often over presidential protests, raised social security benefits or extended eligibility eleven times, six of them in election years. The most irresponsible change came in 1972, when Wilbur Mills, the great House Democratic financial panjandrum and big spender, raised it 20 percent and indexed all benefits to the Consumer Price Index. By 1982 the average pensioner was collecting (in real terms) five times in benefits what he/she had paid in taxes. By the time Reagan became president, social security was 21 percent of the total budget and continued to rise at 3.5 percent a year.

Reagan knew this in general terms and hired a budget wizard, David Stockman, to cut social security. But Stockman was incapable of explaining the problem to Reagan in ways he could grasp, through simple graphics and headline numbers. The consequences were disastrous. Reagan turned down Stockman's cutting scheme partly out of old—fashioned New Deal emotionalism but mainly because he could not understand it. It was the one big instance in which his inherent weaknesses really mattered. As a result 'Reaganomics' showed a yawning gap between theory and practice. It was supposed to produce a $28 billion budget surplus by 1986. In fact it produced an accumulated $1,193 billion deficit over the five—year period. Under Reagan the deficit, which essentially dated back to the year 1968 and had got out of hand during the collapse of executive authority in 1975, began to hit the big numbers with a vengeance. He left it running at the rate of $137.3 billion a year. Meanwhile the public debt had risen to $2,684 trillion. In the last year of Carter, when Reagan took over, interest payments on the debt took up the first 10 percent of the budget receipts. By the first year of Reagan's successor, the percentage had risen to 15.

That was the Reagan downside. But we now know it was made to look worse than it actually was. Despite the prolonged expansion of the economy during the 1980s and into the 1990s, figures for US national wealth appeared to show it growing more slowly than its main competitors, indicating that the country was still in relative decline. Other figures suggested that wage rates in the US were failing to keep pace with rates (in real terms) in other leading economies. It was calculated that real average hourly earnings in America were actually falling. A mid—1990s study showed they had declined by 9 percent between 1975 and 1996. Another study indicated that real average family incomes rose by only 2 percent between 1978 and 1995. The fall in real wage rates was attributed to assumptions that the 18 million new jobs created under Reagan (plus 7 million more under President Bush) were mostly poorly paid, unskilled jobs mainly in service industries. The poor figures for median family incomes were quoted as evidence of the continuing, even deepening, problem of poverty in the US.

However, these and other figures did not seem to correspond to what most people regarded as the reality of modern America in the 1980s and 1990s; that it was an increasingly prosperous

country, with almost universally and visibly rising living standards, and that even those officially defined as `poor' were manifestly living better. Then at the end of 1996, a panel of experts led by the Stanford University economist Michael Boskin, and known as the Congressional Advisory Commission on the Consumer Price Index, released figures showing that the Consumer Price Index had been overestimating the inflation rate of the US economy, that it had been doing so steadily but increasingly for twenty years, and that in consequence some of the most fundamental statistics about the US economy were grievously misleading. The effect of exaggerated rises in the CPI over so long a period was to depress the value of real wages (that is, nominal dollar wages adjusted to take account of inflation). At the request of the *New York Times*, the economist Leonard Nakamura conducted a revisionist exercise. He calculated that the CPI had overstated the US inflation rate in the 1970s by 1.25 percentage points (compounded) annually and that the figure had slowly risen to 2.75 in 1996. By feeding a corrected CPI inflation figure into the statistics, Nakamura estimated that real average hourly aggregates, far from falling, had actually risen by 25 percent, 1975—96. Moreover, the GDP had grown by twice the received rate during the period and family incomes had shot up by 19 percent.

This revelation of the frailty of official figures also cast new light on the deficit. Under the Wilbur Mills index—linking Act, the US government was obliged by law to raise social security provisions annually in accordance with the CPI. The Boskin Commission showed that these increases had been consistently added, at rates made more significant by compound interest, appreciably higher than the real increase in the cost of living. The old, benefiting in any event from an unfunded system, were doing even better than critics had supposed. This explains why retailers and advertising agents were paying more and more attention to the elderly as sources of spending power. But it also explained why the deficit had grown so fast, because an exaggerated CPI affected government checks going to all kinds of other categories, in addition to the pensioners. (It is true that taxpayers also benefited from an overestimated inflation rate, but only marginally.) The Boskin Commission estimated that, if the CPI remained uncorrected, an extra $1 trillion would be added to the debt by 2008. On the other hand if the corrections were made, one—third of the budget deficit projected for 2005 would disappear. And, projected backwards, it could be seen that the false CPI calculations were responsible for a large percentage of the deficit under Reagan, and for which he was blamed. Moreover, the revised figures for the growth in national wealth, wage rates, and family incomes made it clear that the 'feel—good' atmosphere which Reagan succeeded in generating was not just a public relations exercise by the Great Communicator but was solidly based on real improvements. There had been no `smoke and mirrors' after all!

Leaving aside this exercise in statistical revisionism, the Reagan years brought solid achievements which were manifestly real even at the time. It was Reagan's aim, from the start, to restore the confidence of ordinary Americans in themselves and in their country. Reagan was good at paying attention to things which to more sophisticated people seemed so obvious as to be not worth bothering about. He thought that a good deal of America's pride had rested in the presidency. In his view, the Imperial presidency, from FDR to Nixon, had worked very well, and the diminished presidency of 1974—80 had failed. He rightly blamed Ford and Carter. On August io, 1974, the day after Nixon left office, Ford ordered the Marine Guard to stand down from the front of the West Wing of the White House in symbolic acknowledgment of the decline in the power of the presidency. Carter, a scruffy person at the best of times, wore sweaters doing business in the Oval Office. Reagan ended all that egalitarianism immediately. He did not need to be told that the stage and democratic statesmanship have a lot in common. As his White House

administrative officer he appointed a young student of the presidency, John F. W. Rogers, who was delighted to recreate its solemn grandeur. He brought back `Hail to the Chief' and the Herald Trumpeters. Presidential symbolism and sumptuary were brushed up. Staff wore suits and ties to the office—by order. Guards of honor were regularly in attendance and properly inspected. The armed forces were delighted. Foreign visitors were impressed. The public was pleased. And Reagan flourished as the chief actor in a show which was again playing to full houses.

But it was more than show. There was substance. Reagan was not content with the relative decline in US military power. He did not think it was necessary. He was sure it was undesirable. He noted that defense spending as a percentage of GDP, which had been 13.2 percent at the peak of the Korean War, had fallen to 8.9 percent at the peak of hostilities in Southeast Asia. By the time he reached office it was only 4.8 percent of GNP. One of Reagan's axioms was that real need in global terms was to be the criterion of defense spending, not financial restraints. He believed, as did Margaret Thatcher, that the flowing tide of Soviet expansion in the 1970s could be reversed by judicious additions to the West's defense efforts, and a renewed will to resist further encroachments. He also believed (as did she) that Russia was a fundamentally flawed power economically, facing growing pressures of all kinds, and that its will to match the West in global defense would eventually falter and crack provided the West itself reasserted the determination which had been so conspicuously lacking in the 1970s. So he embarked on a rearmament program to recover the lost ground and morale. In current dollars, defense spending rose from $119.3 billion in 1979 to $209.9 billion in 1983 and $2.73.4 billion in 1986. Reagan said: `I asked [the Joint Chiefs of Staff] to tell me what new weapons they needed to achieve military superiority over our potential enemies.' If it came to a choice between national security and the deficit, `I'd have to come down on the side of national defense.'

One of the results of increased spending was the redressing of the strategic nuclear balance, upset by the fact that Russia had, for nearly a decade when Reagan took office, been outspending the US by 50 percent annually on missiles. Reagan was particularly concerned by the large—scale deployment in eastern Europe of intermediate—range, multiple—warhead SS20 rockets. On June 17, 1980 Margaret Thatcher had negotiated with President Carter an agreement to counter the SS20s by deploying American Cruise missiles in Britain. On the basis of this first move, Reagan and Thatcher were able to persuade other NATO members to provide sites for the Cruise network and also to deploy Pershing missiles. Deploying Cruise in particular served notice on the Soviet government that the era of indecision in the White House was over.

Reagan was seen at his most decisive and masterful in his adoption of the Strategic Defense Initiative, a project conceived by his National Security Advisor, Robert C. McFarlane. This was an attempt to provide an effective defense against incoming missiles and so to move away from the horrific concept of Mutually Assured Destruction which had dominated the Cold War in the 1970s. McFarlane and Reagan agreed that MAD was a horrible concept anyway and had the additional demerit that it placed the United States, Russia, and China on the same moral (and technical) level. The SDI (or `Star Wars' as it came to be known), on the other hand, allowed the US to make full use of its advanced technology, where it held a big (and, as it turned out, growing) lead over Russia. SDI was an example of Reagan's ability to grasp a big new idea, simplify it, and give it all it was worth, including presenting it to the American people with consummate skill. It was the most important change in American strategic policy since the adoption of containment and the foundation of NATO, yet from its inception in 1982 to its adoption (and publication) it took only a year. The old man could hustle when necessary.

The rearmament program also included the expansion and training of Rapid Deployment Forces, de—mothballing World War Two battleships and equipping them with Cruise missiles, the development of the radar—evasive Stealth bomber, and a vast panoply of high—technology missiles, defensive and offensive, nuclear and conventional. Strategic planning and tactical training of the US forces were redesigned around the use, for both conventional and nuclear purposes, of these new weapons, a change which was to prove of critical importance in the 1991—2 Gulf War. However, Reagan did not hesitate to use armed force, in appropriate measure, during his presidency. On April 2, 1982, without warning or declaration of war, Argentine armed forces invaded and occupied the British Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic. Reagan agreed with Margaret Thatcher that this act of unprovoked aggression must be reversed, and the US provided valuable high—technology intelligence assistance to the British forces deployed to remove the aggressors, an operation which ended in the unconditional surrender of the Argentine forces (and, in consequence, the replacement of the Argentine military dictatorship by a democratic regime). In late October 1983 Reagan took decisive action to reverse the violent installation of a Communist regime in the island of Grenada in the West Indies, a move which had been made with Cuban and Russian support and was designed to lead to Communist takeovers in other West Indian islands. Reagan acted at the request of the leaders of Grenada's neighbors, Jamaica, Barbados, St Vincent, St Lucia, Dominica, and Antigua, and the speed and secrecy with which he moved was an important part of the operation's success. Reagan took the decision to act on October 2.1, US troops landed on the 25th and restored constitutional authority, and began withdrawing promptly on November 2. Reagan also took effective action against international terrorism, a growing scourge of the 1970s and 1980s. On July 8, 1985, he branded five nations, Iran, North Korea, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Libya as `members of a confederation of terrorist states,' carrying out `outright acts of war' against the US. On April 5, 1986, a terrorist bomb exploded in a Berlin disco frequented by US servicemen, killing one and a Turkish woman, and injuring 200. US intercepts established beyond doubt that Libya had a hand in this crime and on April 14 Reagan authorized US F111 bombers to carry out an attack on Gadafy's military headquarters and barracks in Tripoli, Mrs Thatcher giving permission for US aircraft to operate from their bases in Britain. This successful raid got the message across to Gadafy and others.

Reagan's confident simplicity and willingness to take risks and act fast continued to surprise his colleagues. Critics laughed at his supposed naivety, but as `Bud' McFarlane would say, shaking his head in wonder, `He knows so little and accomplishes so much.' George Shultz, Reagan's Secretary of State, presented a remarkable portrait of his boss. He wrote: 'Reagan knew more about the big picture and matters of salient importance than most people, perhaps especially some of his immediate staff, gave him credit for or appreciated. He had blind spots and a tendency to avoid tedious detail. But the job of those around him was to protect him from those weaknesses and build on his strengths.' He had, said Shultz, `a strong and constructive agenda, much of it labeled impossible and unsustainable in the early years of his presidency. He challenged the conventional wisdom on arms—control, on the possibility of movement towards freedom in the Communist—dominated world, on the need to stand up to Iran in the Persian Gulf, on the superiority of market— and enterprise—based economies.' Reagan's great virtue, said Shultz, was that he `did not accept that extensive political opposition doomed an attractive idea. He would fight resolutely for an idea believing that, if it was valid, he could persuade the American people to support it.'

Reagan's essential achievement was to restore the will and self—confidence of the American people, while at the same time breaking the will and undermining the self—confidence of the small group of men who ran what he insisted on calling the `Evil Empire' of Communism. In this second part of his task, he was aided by an extraordinary stroke of fortune. From December 1979, the Soviet leaders, from a mixture of fear, greed, and good intentions, plunged into the civil war in Afghanistan which they had helped to promote. They thus became involved in a Vietnam—type guerrilla war which they could never win and which placed a growing strain on their resources. `The boot,' as Reagan put it, was `now on the other foot.' In Vietnam, Russia and China, by supplying weapons, had been able to inflict a totally incommensurate degree of damage on US resources and morale. Now America, in turn, by supplying a comparatively small number of weapons to the Afghan guerrillas, was able to put an immense strain on the Soviet economy and, still more, on the resolution of its leadership. The war lasted a decade and Russia never even began to win it, despite deploying 120,000 troops (16,000 of whom were killed and 30,000 wounded) and immense numbers of tanks, aircraft, and helicopters, many of which were destroyed by US—supplied weapons. During the last year of Reagan's presidency,
the new Soviet dictator, Mikhail Gorbachev, accepted the inevitable: on February 8, 1988 he announced that Soviet troops would pull out of Afghanistan completely, and the withdrawal was completed by February 15, 1989, just after Reagan handed over to his successor.

The cost of the war to the already strained and declining Soviet economy was unbearable and undoubtedly played a major role in bringing about the changes in Moscow's thinking which began in the mid—1980s and soon accelerated. On top of the debilitating effect of Afghanistan came the Reagan rearmament program, and especially the Strategic Defense Initiative. In a desperate attempt to match the US technological effort in defense, the Soviet leadership did the unthinkable: it attempted to reform the Marxist—Leninist economy in the hope of reinvigorating it. In the process they lost control of the system as a whole, saw the Evil Empire disintegrate, and watched, almost helpless, as the great monolith of the USSR collapsed. So Communism was submerged, the Cold War ended, and the United States became the world's sole superpower. The effect of SDI was to add to the stresses on the Soviet economy and thus eventually destroy the totalitarian states. As Vladimir Lukhim, Soviet foreign policy expert and later ambassador to the United States, put it at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington in 1992: `It is clear that SDI accelerated our catastrophe by at least five years.'

The end of the Cold War began on September 12, 1989 when the first non—Communist government took over in Warsaw, continued with the destruction of the Berlin Wall on the night of November 9—10, and culminated in the first half of 1991, when the Soviet Union was abolished and Boris Yeltsin was elected first democratic President of a nonCommunist Russia. All this took place after Reagan had left the White House but it came as no surprise to him. He had never accepted the view, commonly expressed even late in his presidency, that the US was in irreversible decline, especially in relation to Russia. One of the most fashionable books of 1988, much flourished by liberal pundits as a stick to beat the Reagan administration, pointed to the many `threats' to America's economic wellbeing, especially from Mexico: `By far the most worrying situation of all ... lies just to the south of the United States, and makes the Polish "crisis" for the USSR seem small by comparison.' Reagan was content to follow the guidance of his own President's Committee on Integrated Long Term Strategy, which also in 1988 published its long—term forecast, *Discriminate Deterrence*. This argued that there were no economic reasons why the US should not continue to shoulder its superpower burden and continue its limited role of preserving peace up to the year 2010 and beyond. It predicted that, by this date,

the USSR would have sunk to the fourth place in the world league (fifth if the European Union was counted as a single power) and that America, with an $8 trillion economy, would still be producing twice as much as its nearest rival, China. The events of the years 1989—91 reinforced the essential truth of this calculation, and no developments which have occurred since the early 1990s have undermined it.

Reagan's Vice—President, George Bush, won the Republican nomination in 1988 by acclamation because he was identified with the Reagan achievement, and he won the election handsomely because he promised that he would carry on in the Reagan spirit, and was generally believed. His opponent, Michael Dukakis, governor of Massachusetts, said he stood on his state record, which he said demonstrated his `competence,' but he made a mess of organizing his campaign, which suggested otherwise. The result gave Bush (and his running mate Dan Quayle, Senator from Indiana) a comfortable plurality, 48,886,097 to 41,809,074, and a big majority in the electoral college, 426 to 111. It had been forgotten, however, that Bush had originally hotly opposed Reagan in 1980 as a maverick and extremist, and had joined Reagan on the ticket as part of a balanced compromise package. He was not fundamentally in sympathy with Reagan's aims either intellectually or by temperament and, more important, he lacked Reagan's simple clarity and will. Bush was at his best when he had a more resolute foreign ally to stiffen his resolve, and indeed to make up his mind for him.

One of the consequences of the end of the Cold War was that Russia (and to some extent even China, which remained Communist) began to play a more responsible role at the United Nations and so allowed the Security Council to operate, for the first time, as its founders had intended. During the 1980s, the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, who was in bitter dispute with fundamentalist Iran, had received some support and encouragement from the West, not least America, on the basis of the old adage, `my enemy's enemy is my friend.' Thus encouraged, he had used his country's oil revenues to build up immense armed forces. Suspicion of Saddam's intentions had been growing, however, and on July 17, 1990 the US Senate, without any prompting from the administration, prohibited the sale of any further military technology to Iraq and, for good measure, cut off farm credits. By July 31, over 100,000 Iraqi troops were massed on the border of Kuwait, the small but immensely rich Gulf state which was a major supplier of crude to the United States and many other advanced countries. At the time it was widely reported that the American ambassador in Baghdad had failed to warn Saddam during a meeting at this time that an occupation of Kuwait would be regarded by Washington as a threat to America's vital interests, though this was denied in evidence before the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee in March 1990. At all events, on August 1, 1990 Saddam's army invaded and occupied Kuwait and annexed its oilfields.

Happily, this unprovoked act of aggression coincided with a private international meeting in Aspen, Colorado, attended by both President Bush and Margaret Thatcher, who was then still British Prime Minister. Bush's first inclination was to concentrate on the defense of Saudi Arabia, America's chief ally (and oil supplier) in the area. But Mrs Thatcher, with the Falklands campaign in mind, forcefully persuaded him that the act of aggression must be reversed, not merely for the sake of the unfortunate people of Kuwait, who were being treated with merciless cruelty by the Iraqi troops, but to deter any other potential aggressor. Bush agreed, that was the plan adopted, the Security Council was consulted and signified its consent, and over the next few weeks, under Bush's leadership, an international coalition of over fifty states was assembled. An enormous armed force, chiefly composed of American units but with significant contributions by

Britain and France (as well as many Arab states) was assembled in the area. In December 1990 Bush, quoting the `Carter Doctrine,' secured the consent of the Democratic Congress to use force, and Saddam was told that, if his troops were not withdrawn by January 15, 1991, he would be ejected from Kuwait by force.

By this time, Mrs Thatcher had been ousted by an internal coup in her own party, being succeeded by the featureless John Major. But the momentum of Operation Desert Storm, as it was called, was unstoppable, even in Bush's hands, and when Saddam missed the deadline, intense aerial bombing of Iraqi military targets began. The ground offensive, involving units from the huge coalition army (540,000 US troops, 43,000 British, 40,000 Egyptian, 16,000 French, and 20,000 Syrians) began on February 24 and lasted five days, during which all Iraqi troops had been cleared from Kuwait or surrendered, and Saddam's 600,000—strong army decisively defeated. This brief campaign was a triumph for General Norman K. Schwarzkopf, the American force commander, and the chairman of the joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin L. Powell, who had organized the gigantic buildup and directed the overall strategy. But neither was anxious to press on to Baghdad and impose a democratic alternative to Saddam's military dictatorship, which they saw as a `political' extension of a UN authorized campaign which was entirely military. In the absence of pressure from Mrs Thatcher to finish the job, Bush was content with the liberation of Kuwait. So an unrepentant Saddam was left in power, with much of his armed forces intact, and the United States was left with the burden of maintaining large forces in the area and supervising Saddam's adherence to the terms he had agreed for a ceasefire and to UN resolutions.

This unsatisfactory conclusion and aftermath to one of the most brilliant military campaigns in US history, which had demonstrated the power and efficacy of the new generation of sophisticated weapons produced by Reagan's rearmament program, naturally lowered public confidence in President Bush's judgment and resolve. He was increasingly seen as well meaning but ineffectual and indecisive. There was indeed something fundamentally wrong with Bush, to which his curriculum vitae gave a clue. In addition to serving two terms as vice—president, he had been a Texas oilman, a Texas congressman (1967—70), American ambassador to the UN (1971—2) and to China (1974—5), head of the CIA (1976) and chairman of the Republican National Committee (1972—4). But he had done all these jobs for brief spells before moving on, and there was always the suggestion that he was not a stayer. Moreover he had fought two unsuccessful campaigns to get into the Senate, as well as his aborted bid for the presidency in 1980. Though presenting himself as a large—scale Texan operator, he had in fact been born in Massachusetts, had an Ivy League education, lived in Maine, and worshiped in an Episcopalian church: he was, in short, an Eastern Wasp in a stetson. He was curiously inarticulate for a well—educated man, used words clumsily (unlike Reagan, whose verbal touch was always sure). He had an unfortunate habit of abandoning his written text, in speeches, for extempore remarks, and beginning sentences without being sure what his main verb would be, entangling himself in syntactical confusion and thus ending each utterance on an uncertain note.

Bush was always a gentleman and, so long as the Reagan penumbra surrounded him, did moderately well. Then, as the impact of Reagan faded, Bush faded with it. Panama was a case in point. President Carter had concluded a treaty with Panama, ratified by the Senate on March 16, 1978, which in effect handed over the Panama Canal in stages to a sovereign Panamanian government. This retreat of US power had been much criticized, and the feeling that America had got a poor deal was reinforced by the behavior of President Manuel Noriega, who used the Panamanian government to operate a huge drug—smuggling business in the United States. In

1989 Florida grand juries indicted Noriega on a variety of serious drug offenses and demanded his extradition. America imposed economic sanctions when Noriega refused to surrender to the US authorities and, after a US naval officer was killed by Panamanian police on December 16, Bush brought himself to order an invasion of the country by 10,000 American troops. Panamanian dissidents duly overthrew the government; Noriega was arrested on January 3, 1990 and taken to Miami, where he was convicted of drug—smuggling on April 9, 1992. and sentenced to forty years in a top—security prison. But, characteristically, Bush did not follow up this striking, and much approved, success by revising the operations of the Panama Canal, where conditions continued to deteriorate under Panamanian control. Bush's instincts were often right but he did not know the meaning of the word `thorough.' Thus the fact that he delighted to display a portrait of Theodore Roosevelt in the Cabinet room and tell visitors about his quiet voice and Big Stick, was an ironic comment on his administration.

Nevertheless, it is likely Bush would have been reelected in 1992. had it not been for the intervention of a Texan billionaire, H. Ross Perot, in the race. Perot, born in 1930, was an Annapolis graduate who left the US Navy in 1957 to found Electronic Data Systems, which he built into a firm worth over $2 billion by the mid—1980s. Campaigning on a platform of eliminating the deficit and paying off the national debt, Perot originally attracted more interest, in a poor field, than any third candidate since the Bull Moose Party. However, his indecisiveness—he filed his candidacy on March 18, 1992, pulled out on July 16, and reentered on October 11—ruined his chances of a dramatic upset. Even so, he polled 19 percent of the votes, the largest third—party fraction of the polls since Theodore Roosevelt in 1912 (27.4 percent) and Millard Fillmore in 1856 (21.6 percent). The effect of the high Perot poll was to let in a lackluster Democratic candidate, William (`Bill') Jefferson Clinton, governor of Arkansas. Born in 11946, Clinton came from a modest family background and rose through academic performance, was Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, graduated at Yale Law School in 1973, and taught law at the University of Arkansas. Critics dismissed him as a `spoiled Sixties rebel' and `draft dodger' who had consistently taken up anti—American postures from Vietnam to the Gulf War. Others drew attention to his career in the murky waters of Arkansas politics. There, he ran unsuccessfully for Congress at thirty—two, was elected Arkansas attorney—general in 1976, and became the state's youngest governor in 1978. Although defeated in 1980, he won reelection as governor in 1982, 1984, and 1986. In Arkansas he was universally known as `The Boy,' and when elected president of the United States in 1992, with 43 percent of the vote, he was the first minority President since 1968 and the youngest since Kennedy was chosen in 1960.

Clinton, and his wife Hillary Rodham Clinton, rapidly ran into trouble in the White House. One reason was inexperience. Clinton had great difficulty in completing his administration and getting Senate approval for some of his nominees, especially for the post of attorney general. When he finally succeeded, his choice, Janet Reno, soon involved the administration in a disastrous episode near Waco, Texas, where federal agents conducted an ill—planned assault on the headquarters of the Branch Davidian religious sect, run by a messianic figure called David Koresh. The raid, by nearly l00 agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, was a failure and led to five deaths, four of them agents. Reno then took over personally and, tiring of negotiations, she ordered a military—style attack with heavy equipment and gas, during which the entire compound went up in flames, in which seventy—eight of Koresh's followers were burned alive. Among the dead were seventeen children.

On the more positive side, Clinton entrusted the presentation of his health—care bill on Capitol Hill to his wife, an outspoken and venturesome lady who impressed the legislators, one

of whom, Democrat Dan Rostenkowski, of the House Ways and Means Committee, told her: `In the very near future, the President will be known as your husband.' This turned into an accurate, if embarrassing, prophecy since the First Lady was soon involved in a complex financial investigation into an Arkansas firm with which she was connected, the Whitewater Development Corporation, and a number of other awkward matters. Indeed she became the first President's wife to be subpoenaed in a criminal investigation. In the meantime the health—care Bill was blocked. Clinton's budget—package attempt to reduce the deficit, as amended by Congress, cut it from 4 percent to 2.4 percent of GDP (from $255 billion in 1993 to $167 billion in 1994), but there was little general coherence to his domestic program and still less to his foreign policy. He ended Bush's disastrous involvement in Somalia; on the other hand, he occupied Haiti for a spell, to little purpose. He was tardy in trying to sort out the series of Balkan conflicts left by the disintegration of the former Yugoslav federation and he used the continuing difficulties with Saddam's Iraq more as an occasional exercise to strike military postures and win votes than for any constructive purpose. Virtually all the rest of Clinton's first term was spent fending off a series of scandals.

The idea of a president being brought down by the exposure of wrongdoing had haunted the White House since Watergate, though it must be said that the media had never since shown quite the same relish for presidential blood. Under Reagan, National Security Council officials Admiral John Poindexter and Colonel Oliver North had been accused of conducting secret arms sales (via Israel) to Iran, hoping for goodwill to free US hostages held by the fundamentalist regime and in order to use profits from the $48 million sales to finance democratic Contra rebels seeking to undermine the Communist regime in Nicaragua. This was said to be in violation of the Boland Amendments, passed by Congress on December 21, 1982, which forbade the CIA or the Defense Department from using any funds `for the purpose of overthrowing the government of Nicaragua or provoking a military exchange between Nicaragua and Honduras,' and by a further Amendment on October 12, 1984, which extended the prohibition to any agency involved in `intelligence activities.' There was a general impression in Congress during the 1970s and 1980s that US undercover activities, including the support of democratic insurgents, were the product of the Cold War. Actually, they go back to President Washington, who was voted a `Contingency Fund' for this purpose and given entire discretion over its use. Madison funded dissidents in Spanish Florida and Jefferson wanted to finance an attempt to burn down St James's Palace in retaliation for the burning of Washington. Andrew Jackson used secret funds to subvert Mexico and James Polk subsidized American insurgents in Texas. Lincoln created an organization in Europe for secret purposes, eventually dignified with the title of the Office of Naval Intelligence, and there were many instances of covert work in almost every subsequent presidency. An attempt was made not only to indict North and Poindexter and crank up a Congressional witchhunt on the scale of Watergate but even to involve President Reagan himself. However, after a series of televised hearings from November 1986, which failed to inflame the public, a Senate—House committee, dominated by Democrats, was obliged to report there was no direct evidence involving Reagan. In 1989 both Poindexter (April 7) and North (May 4) were found guilty of misleading Congress, but an appeals court (July 20, 1990) overturned both convictions and other charges against them were dropped.

The witchhunt served only to reveal a waning popular backing for proceedings against officials who had merely acted in what they thought American interests, even if they had technically broken the law. At the same time, several minor functionaries were forced to pleabargain and had their savings wiped out by the heavy legal costs involved in defending

themselves against a special prosecutor, with unlimited funds, appointed solely to deal with possible unlawful activities by the executive branch. The continual fear of prosecution engendered what has been called a `culture of mistrust' in American government and led to an unwillingness of public—spirited citizens to run for high political office or to accept presidential invitations to serve. One critic of the intermittent witchhunting of the executive by Congress noted that `a self—enforcing scandal machine' had come into existence: `Prosecutors use journalists to publicise criminal cases [involving members of the administration] while journalists, through their news—stories, put pressure on prosecutors for still more action.' `Scandal politics' were thus part of the process whereby `popular democracy' was degenerating into a `media democracy.'

It could be argued that the growing reluctance of gifted men and women to become candidates for national office explained the presidency of Bill Clinton. Certainly he was soon in trouble both for past misdemeanors as governor of Arkansas and for present malfeasance and abuse of power as chief magistrate. The charges against Clinton fell under three heads. First there was his own personal involvement, as his wife's partner, in the Whitewater and related scandals. Second was a series of sexual accusations made against him by a procession of women with names like Gennifer Flowers, Connie Hamzy, Sally Perdue, and Paula Corbin, some of these charges including Clinton's use of Arkansas police as procurers. Third were a miscellaneous series of charges reflecting badly on Clinton's behavior in federal office, the most important of which concerned the mysterious death of his aide, Vince Foster. Since Watergate, the media had developed an irritating habit of adding `gate' to the name of any episode with a whiff of political scandal. So, in addition to Irangate in the 1980s, the 1990s now saw piling up Travelgate and Troopergate, Whitewatergate, Fostergate, and Haircutgate. This wearied the public, and, granted the unwillingness of newspapers like the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* to investigate President Clinton's wrongdoing with the same zeal they had once displayed in Nixon's case, or even to report the investigations of others, it is not surprising that the climate of scandal, in the end, did not prevent Clinton getting reelected in 1996. It might have been a different matter if the Republicans had come up with a genuine vote—winner. But General Colin Powell would not run, or perhaps his wife, the strong—minded but fearful—of—assassination Alma, would not let him run. So the Republicans, in despair, at last picked the elderly Senator Robert Dole, who had been demanding to be their candidate as long as most people could remember, and in November 1996 Clinton had no difficulty at all in fending him off and getting himself reelected by a comfortable margin.

The failures and moral inadequacies of Clinton did have one important, indeed historic consequence however. In the mid—term elections of 1994, Clinton's unpopularity enabled a brilliant political tactician, Newt Gingrich, the Republican Minority Leader in the House, to organize a nationwide campaign which ended in the Republican recapture of both Houses of Congress. This victory, the biggest Congressional upset since 1946, was significant for a number of reasons. For all practical purposes, the Democrats had dominated Congress, except for one or two brief intervals, since 1932. There had been no precedent for this long legislative hegemony in American history and, the Democrats tending to be the high—tax, high—spending party, their continued tenure of the Constitution's financial mechanism explained why the federal government had continued to absorb so large a proportion of the GDP, why the deficit had mounted, and why national indebtedness had become such a problem. What was so remarkable about Democratic control of Congress was that it had continued during the period when the nation preferred to elect Republican presidents. Thus in every Congress from 1961 to 1993 (the

87th to the 103rd), the Democrats had a majority in the House, even though the Republicans held the presidency in ten of them. These majorities were sometimes overwhelming and always substantial: even in Nixon's best year, 1973, for instance, the Democrats still had a margin of 47 in the House. Carter, a weak Democratic president, nevertheless had a majority of 149 in 1977. Under Reagan, who twice won Republican landslides, the Democratic majority varied from 51 to 104. Reagan did contrive, however, to exert a pull over senatorial elections and had a small Republican Senate majority in three of his four Congresses. But the situation returned to `normal' under Bush, who had to work throughout his presidency with Congresses in which his opponents controlled both Houses easily.

This Democratic paramountcy did not come about for political reasons. Expenditure on political campaigning had been rising throughout the 20th century and incumbents found it easier to raise money both because of their higher exposure and because they were able to direct federal funds to their districts. The Federal Election Campaign Act of 1974 attempted to reduce candidates' dependence on money, but the Supreme Court struck down one of its central provisions as unconstitutional (the limitation on contributions by candidates themselves) and as a result it actually worked in favor of the incumbent. By 1990, over go percent of the House members were getting themselves reelected, mainly for financial reasons, against 75 percent in the late 1940s. Hence the 1994 defeat, which reversed a strong Democratic majority in the House and secured the Republicans a working majority in the Senate too, was achieved against a long—entrenched structural bias in the system, and came as a profound shock to the Democrats. Its effect on Clinton was devastating. Dick Morris, his chief political strategist, described a scene with the President after the defeat: `Then I looked straight at him and shook him harshly, violently. I said through clenched teeth: "Get your nerve back. Get your f— nerve back." He looked at me with bloodshot weary eyes and with face downcast, solemnly nodded yes.' Morris persuaded Clinton that the remedy was to move his presidency towards the center and cooperate with Congress in pushing through popular legislation of a more conservative cast. Morris himself fell as a result of a morals scandal in autumn 1996 but before he did so he had largely achieved his object.

In August 1996 Clinton signed into law the Welfare Reform Act, the first major piece of legislation from the new Republican Congress, which dismantled a fundamental part of the welfare—state structure going back to the New Deal in 1935. Under this Aid to Families with Dependent Children ceased to be an open—ended distribution of cash entitlements to individual beneficiaries and became a $16.4 billion lump—sum `block grant' to the fifty states to allocate as they believed more effectively. This return of financial power from the federal government to the states set up pragmatic competition between them in ways to use money to reduce poverty. It marked the first change of approach to the problem since Lyndon Johnson declared 'unconditional war on poverty' in 1964—a war which had been going on longer than Vietnam, had cost more, and had been even less successful. Clinton's action in signing the Bill into law was the most significant move of his presidency and helped to explain how he contrived to get himself reelected three months later. The Republicans, however, retained control of the House—the first time they reelected a House majority since 1928—and even strengthened their grip on the Senate. This insured that Clinton's move towards the center would be sustained and that Congress would continue to probe into the chinks in his armor.

The Welfare Reform Act reflected a general feeling among Americans in the late 1990s that the country had moved too far in the direction of what might be called federal centralism, and that a

redressment was needed. At the end of the 20th century America remained a profoundly democratic country. All its instincts were democratic, and the core of its democracy lay in the fifty states. The states were merely a top tier of a series of devolved representations. In 1987, the last count, there were 83,166 local governments in the United States, with over 526,000 elective posts. No other country in the world had anything approaching this number and diversity of democratic forms. Considerable local power was still exercised, especially by the states, producing a wide variety of laws. Thus, most states levy income tax, but twelve do not. Most states have capital punishment, but twelve do not. Oregon and Hawaii have forms of state planning unknown in the other forty—eight. Utah is dry, whereas Louisiana has virtually no laws about liquor. Up to about 1933, the states defended their rights effectively (except during the Civil War). In the 1930s, however, the federal government began to invade the states' right to handle economic issues. At first the Supreme Court resisted this federal invasion, but since the 1950s the Court, Congress, and the federal government have combined to diminish the powers of the states. Strictly speaking, the Constitution gives the states only four absolute guarantees: equal representation in the Senate; protection from invasion and domestic violence; the right to jurisdictional integrity; and the right to a republican form of government. All the rest is open to interpretation and the interpretations by the Court since the 1940s have gone against the states.

We will come to the role of the Court itself shortly, but in the meantime it is worth noting that the switch from state to federal power tends to work against democracy. There is in America no automatic, nationally organized, and compulsory registration system, and only about 70 percent of those eligible are registered. If one existed, turnout in federal elections would rise by 10—12 percent. As it is, not much more than half those entitled to vote do so. This is a long—term problem. Thus there was a 52.4 percent turnout in 1932, at the height of the Great Depression, and 54 percent in 1992. The highest turnout, 62.6, was in the 1960 presidential election. Next to Switzerland, the United States has the lowest figure for voting as a percentage of the voting—age population than any other advanced state (though it is round about average in the percentage of registered voters who turn out). Local elections are often fought with far more passion and higher participation. The one respect in which federal democracy has improved in the 20th century (apart from the obvious extension of the franchise to women and eighteen year—olds) is in the participation of blacks, especially in the South. Thus in Mississippi as recently as 1964 only 7 percent of adult blacks were registered; by 1990, black registration was only 8 percent below white, though the turnout was lower.

All aspects of local government, from the states down, are particularly important because the US continued to grow in population throughout the 20th century. It was part of the uniqueness of America that it was the only advanced country with this apparently invincible propensity. The biggest decennial increase was in the 1950s, when population rose by 17,997,377, as big as the entire population of a medium—large European country. During the 1980s the jump upwards was almost as large, 17,164,068, giving the country a population of 249,632,692 in 1990. The census for 2000 is likely to show an even bigger increase, taking the US to a population figure of around 280,000,000. Birth—rates remained high, but a lot of the increase was due to a new surge of immigration. In fact the 1965 Immigration Act produced the greatest legal flood of new arrivals since the years 1900—14: the share of immigration in total US population growth rose from 1s percent in 1960—70 to 35 percent in 1970—80 and to almost 40 percent 1980—90. (These figures leave out illegal immigration, which is large but often transitory.) Demographic projections, especially long—term ones, are notoriously unreliable, but if the trends of the last forty years continued, the total population of the US would rise to 400 million by the end of the

zest century, with whites (as conventionally defined) in a minority as early as 2180. The effect of immigration and demographics on American culture will be examined shortly. For the moment, it is important to register that America has become notably more crowded in the 20th century. It grew geographically at an astonishing rate in the 19th century. In 1790 it had a land area of 864,746 square miles. At the end of this century it is 3,536,342 square miles, more than four times greater. But while area has long since ceased to expand, population growth has continued relentlessly. In i8oo the average population density of the United States was 6.1 persons per square mile. At the beginning of this century it had risen to 25.6 and by the end of it to well over 70 persons per square mile.

Yet America remained, at the end of the 20th century, a country with enormous contrasts between huge crowded cities and almost primeval wilderness. It was still the country of the skyscraper, reaching upward to breathe air into intense city densities, even in places where land is plentiful. Thus Phoenix, Arizona, a typical 20th—century American big city, grew from 17 square miles with a population of 107,000 in 1950, to 2.48 square miles and a population of 584,000 in 1970, to 450 square miles with a population of 1,052,000 in 199obut it continued to put up towers of glass and steel. The first phase of skyscraper—building ended with the completion of the Empire State Building in New York in 1931. Up to that point, towers had been growing in size by up to ten stories a year. Then there was a long pause, partly explained by the Great Depression and the war, partly by technical difficulties. The resurgence began in the 1970s, with the construction not only of `modest' big skyscrapers like the twin—tower World Trade Center in New York but the much higher 441—meter Sears Tower in Chicago. By the 1990s American supremacy and giganticism in skyscraper—building was being challenged all over the world, in Melbourne and Hongkong, for example, and still more in Malaysia, where in 1996 the Kuala Lumpur twin Petronas Towers, at 440 meters, snatched the crown from Chicago. However, even the planned Mori Tower in Shanghai, at 460 meters, will be only one—fifth higher than the Empire State, and techniques now exist to build towers twice as high—8oo meters and more. American architects and engineers are working on such projects and the tallest buildings the world has ever seen will rise in America during the first decade of the 21st century. Meanwhile, American architects, from the 1970s, had been introducing various forms of postmodernism, reacting from the plain functional towers to forms of classicism, gothicism, and ornamentalism reminiscent of the earliest skyscrapers. The first such exercise was the `Chippendale Highboy,' the AT&T headquarters set up on Madison Avenue by Philip Johnson and John Burgee, 1979—84, with its classical broken pediment on a five—story scale set thirty—seven stories above the sidewalk. This was followed by the Johnson and Burgee gothic Republican Bank, Houston, 1981—4, by the baroque Wacker Drive, Chicago, by Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates in 1981—3, and by a growing variety of extravaganzas.

The notion of architecture, and the business enterprise behind it, as large—scale playthings which—as we have noted—was born in California at the beginning of the 20th century continued to flourish in various parts of America at the end of it. This was American vitalism at its most fervid, unacceptable to some elites, evidently appealing to the many. The archetype of the city which grabbed the visitor by the lapels in the second half of the century was Las Vegas, Nevada, gambling center of the world. Las Vegas Style, based on noise, light, gigantic neon signs, and amazing architectural pastiche, first attracted outside attention when the writer Tom Wolfe paid tribute to `the designer—sculptor geniuses of Las Vegas' in 1964. This was soon followed by a group of professors from the Yale School of Architecture, led by Robert Venturi, who took their students on an analytical tour of the city, producing a key book, *Learning from Las Vegas*. Thus

encouraged, the state of Nevada changed the law in 1968 to allow corporations as well as individuals to own casinos, and, with vast amounts of money now available, hotel—gambling hells on an unprecedented scale began to sprout out of the desert, recalling the creation of the world's first large—scale hotels by Americans in the early 19th century—America's earliest major contribution to cultural patterns. `The Strip' at Las Vegas became, in the words of Alan Hess, `the outdoor museum of American popular culture.' During the Seventies and Eighties and into the Nineties, Las Vegas acquired the Luxor, a pyramid larger than any in Egypt, made of glass not stone, the Excalibur, a romantic Old—Worldstyle castle, on a scale no European castle—builder ever imagined, and the MGM Grand, a pastiche of Hollywood (itself a pastiche) of a daunting size, with over 5,000 rooms. Opposite was opened on January 3, 1997 the New York, New York, a giant pastiche of the Manhattan skyline, housing thousands of rooms, gambling spaces, and entertainment facilities. Characteristically American, they followed in the tradition of the gargantuan, paddle—wheeled Mississippi gambling steamers, with their Babylonian luxuries and rococo decor, which outraged and fascinated Americans between the Age of Jackson and the Civil War.

Yet the urban extravagances and fantasias of end—of—the—century America coexisted with fiercely independent smaller units which still thought of themselves as mere big villages. In the mid—I990s, for instance, the County of Los Angeles forced itself out of the deep recession which, for the first time in the early 1990s, devastated Southern California, by adopting an urban village or mini—city approach, forming units of under 40,000 inhabitants, with a strongly democratic spirit and powerful sense of local identity of a kind lost in the sprawling wilderness of the city of Los Angeles itself. New or reinvigorated urban villages formed themselves with names like Burbank, Glendale, Beverly Hills, West Hollywood, South Gate, Huntington Park, Culver City, and Torrance. These developments took note of the fact that the United States grew up as an independent village culture. Early New England and Virginia were congregations of places which called themselves towns but which were in fact villages. As one urban historian has put it, `Each of several hundred villages repeated a basic pattern. No royal statute, no master—plan, no strong legislative controls, no central administrative offices, no sheriffs or justices of the peace, no synods or prelates, none of the apparatus of government then or now.' Modern urban villages can restructure their economies to meet change quickly, can keep the cost of living down more easily, reduce crime, improve education and services and with less difficulty than urban megaliths. Investors find everything is easier, cheaper, quicker, and less bureaucratic.

Bigness is of the essence of America, a big country with a teeming people, but the notion that everything in United States history has tended towards ever—larger units is false. At the end of the 20th century, small towns were flourishing all over America, from the Vermont hills to the Napa Valley in California, and new ones were being born all the time. Nor has America been an inevitable Hegelian progression from the natural to the mechanical and the artificial. The very earliest European settlers in Massachusetts and Virginia made gardens, perhaps inspired by Sir Francis Bacon's observation, in his essay `On Gardens' (1625), that `God Almighty first planted a garden; and indeed, it is the purest of human pleasures.' Between 1890 and 1940 some of the finest gardens in the history of the world were created in the United States: Otto Kahn's Oheka in Long Island; Mary Helen Wingate Lloyd's Allgates in Haverford, Pennsylvania; Lila Vanderbilt's Shelburne Farms, Vermont; Mrs Gustavus Kirby's Fountain Garden in Westchester, New York; Millicent Estabrook's Rose Garden in Santa Barbara; Arcade in California; Branford House near Groton in Connecticut; James Deering's Vizcaya in Florida; as well as the vast gardens at Biltmore and the many—generational gardens at Hampton, Maryland, which go back

to 1790. In the second half of the 20th century these *plaisances* of millionaires became resorts of the millions as one after the other they were opened to the public, who thus helped to pay for their maintenance. But more gardens were being created. By mid—century American universities had more graduate schools of garden architecture and history than anywhere else in the world, and designers like Fletcher Steele (1885—1971) were performing prodigies to link the traditional with new technologies. Fletcher's great garden at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, called Naumkeag, the original name for Salem, which he created between 1941 and the 1960s, testified to the way in which America had enhanced one of the oldest of the European arts.

While adding to garden history, Americans were also in the 20th century establishing themselves as unmatched preservers and cultivators of the wilderness. As we have seen, the history of the US National Parks goes back to the early 19th century. But it was the Wilderness Act of 1964 and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 which made public authority not merely the protector of the wild but an active and advanced administrator of more than 700 million acres of land. By 1993 the Park Service handled almost 60 million visitors annually, who came to see its 49 national parks, 77 national monuments, 112 historic parks or sites, and 104 other designated areas, covering 124,433 square miles. These included the largest stretches of protected wilderness in the world. The Americans had always oscillated between the convivial and the solitary, between the creator of villages, gardens, great cities, and the explorer of the primeval forest and the lonely stranger. If the monolithic skyscraper, with its thousands of inmates, remained the monument to American gregariousness at the end of the second millennium, it is not surprising that America's best painter of the second half of the 20th century, Andrew Wyeth (b. 1917), devoted his life to the depiction of isolation.

Thereby hangs a traditional tale, or rather two tales. Wyeth, seeking to paint privacy in a public land like America, modeled himself on two great American painters who had done exactly that, Winslow Homer and Thomas Eakins. Homer worked chiefly in Maine and Eakins in rural Pennsylvania; Wyeth oscillated between both for his settings. The loneliness of America, distinctive people in a vast land, was the recurrent theme of Homer in, for instance, *The Nooning* (1892) and *Boys in a Pasture* (1974). Eakins, in his attempts to get deeper into American life, which we have noted, again found himself often depicting the solitary. In following in their steps, Wyeth also worked hard to acquire the delicate touch of Thomas Dewing and the watercolor skills of Sargent—two more outstanding American artists who were essentially private men. Wyeth, however, also belongs to the American tradition of illustration, one of the more formidable strengths of American art. The century 1850—1950 was the golden age of American magazine illustration, when literally hundreds of superb draftsmen, operating often at the very limits of their technology, were able to make a decent living from a vast range of pictorial publications, read by millions. Winslow Homer himself was trained, or trained himself, as a magazine illustrator. His skills were passed on to Howard Pyle, another master illustrator, and Pyle taught Wyeth's father, N. C. Wyeth, who brought up his son in this hard school. But Wyeth also looked to Direr, the first and greatest of the grand European line—illustrators, and to an American prodigy, George de Forest Brush, who traveled widely in the American West in the last quarter of the 19th century and depicted its solitude and the loneliness of the Indian solitary hunter, often with the birds and beasts he had killed: *Out of the Silence* (1886), *The Silence Broken* (1888), *The Headdress Maker* (1890), *The Indian Hunter* (1890).

Twisting together these various strands with growing skill, Wyeth began to produce outstanding paintings soon after World War Two, such as *Christina Olson* (1947), *Roasted Chestnuts* (1956), *Garret Room* (1962), *Adam* (1963), *Up in the Studio* (1965), and *Anna*

Kuerner (1971). Many of his works were of nudes, showing a devotion to and inspiration from another powerful American tradition: Black Water (1972), *Barracoon* (1976), *Surf* (1978); female nudes, these, though Wyeth also painted the male nude: *Undercover* (1970) and *The Clearing* (1979). Wyeth's passion, which he shared with other major American painters, such as Edward Hopper, Charles Burchfield, Grant Wood, Edward Weston, Charles Sheeler, and Georgia O'Keeffe, was for the single object or subject, carefully isolated and intensely realized. He concentrated on particular models, whom he painted again and again over long periods, exercising astonishing patience, concentration, and singlemindedness. Thus for years he concentrated on Siri Erikson, daughter of a Maine neighbor of Finnish descent. In 1971 he began work on Helga Testorf, a neighbor of Wyeth and his wife Betsy in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. Between that year, when Helga was thirty—eight, and 1985, when she was fifty—three and he brought the series to an end, Wyeth created one of the most remarkable series in the history of American art, 240 drawings and paintings in all. Some of the nudes in this series strongly recall the charcoal nudes of Eakins, an inspired academic craftsman of noble skills, who had been trained under the great Gerome in Paris. Almost the entire collection was bought by the connoisseur Leonard E. B. Andrews (1986) for display in the Andrews Foundation, thus preserving for America a collective artifact of immense dignity and significance from a period when the art of painting has been vitiated (not least in America) by mere commercial fashion, determined by the agents and galleries of New York, the world's biggest art center.

The creation of major works of art amid a welter of kitsch, vulgarity, and empty fashion was merely one of the paradoxes of America as it neared the end of the century. America had always been a land of paradoxes, for Europeans first came there from a mixture of greed and idealism. The two had fought for supremacy through its existence but never more so than on the eve of the third millennium. The watershed of the 1960s, after which America moved away from its founding tradition into uncharted seas, intensified the paradoxes. The Declaration of Independence had held it as `self—evident' that `all men are created equal,' yet it ignored the slavery in its midst. In the last half of the 20th century, America strove more earnestly than ever to achieve equality, yet it became more unequal and even the concept of equality before the law came under threat, in theory as well as practice. There was evidence, for instance, that economic inequality, which had declined in the years 1929—69, began to rise thereafter and continued to rise to at least the mid—1990s.

This point should not be overstated. America in the 1990s was essentially a middle—class country, in which over 6o percent owned their own homes, 20 percent owned stocks and bonds (though only half more than $10,000), 77 percent had completed high school, 30 percent had four years in college, and the largest single group, 44 percent, were in professional, technical, and administrative jobs. The true blue—collar working class was only 33 percent and shrinking fast, the remainder, 23 percent, being in service and farming. America had 3,500 universities and colleges of higher education. The Higher Education Acts of 1967 and 1969 and legislation passed in 1972 establishing a federally funded system of need—based student aid combined, with other factors, to raise the number of those enjoying higher education to 6 million in 1965, 7.6 million in 1968, and 9.1 million in 1973. By 1996 it was estimated that i6 million students enrolled in college and that higher education was touching the lives of more than half America's young people. Of these, 9.2 percent were blacks, 5.7 percent Hispanics, and 4.2 percent of Asian origin, with women of all races making up 52 percent of the whole. Of these, 258,000 were at what were termed `historically black colleges' and 2.2 million at private colleges (1990 figures).

Nevertheless, in the mid—1990s it was claimed that about 12 percent of the population were `below the poverty level,' that both an 'overclass' and an `underclass' existed and that the two were drifting further and further apart. Over the twenty—year period the highest 10 percent of incomes rose in real terms by 18 percent and the lowest 10 percent fell in real terms by 11 percent. At the end of the 1980s, the richest 1 percent of the population, numbering 932,000 families, together owned more than was owned by go percent of the entire population, and nearly half their income came from `passive investment' (stocks, bonds, trusts, bank holdings, and property). Incomes from work showed a similar pattern of rising inequality. At the beginning of the 1980s, the average chief executive made 109 times as much as the average blue—collar worker, and in the decade raised his pay by 212 percent against 53 percent for average workers. By 1993 CEOs were making (on average) 157 times as much as shopfloor workers, against 17 times as much in Japan, for instance. Taking the period 1961—96 as a whole, it was possible to show, statistically, that the overclass enjoyed a privileged existence in many ways: far less likely to serve in the draft—in 1862—72, 39,701 men graduated from three typical overclass universities, but only twenty of them died in Vietnam, from a total death figure of 58,000—far more likely to gain admission to an Ivy League college, and far more likely to make a significant contribution to public service. It is notable, for instance, that the federal district judges appointed during Reagan's two terms, 22.3 percent of the whole, had an average net worth of over a million dollars.

Better—off Americans are far more likely to vote and far, far more likely to get into Congress. Thus in the 1992 elections in California, whites, 55 percent of the population, provided 82 percent of the votes. Hispanics, 25 percent of the population, provided only 7 percent of the votes, and Asians, with 1o percent of the population, provided only 3 percent of the votes. As we have noted, incumbency was the key to Congressional membership because of the high cost of electioneering. A congressman spent an average of $52,000 to get elected in 1974, $140,000 in 1980, and $557,403 in 1992. That meant he and his contributors had to spend $5,000 a week for a two—year term. A senator had to spend $12,000 a week for a six—year term. Changes in the law about election funding meant that members of Congress were more likely to succeed if they were wealthy and could fund themselves. The result could be seen, for instance, in the composition of the 103rd Congress, 1993—4. Of its 539 members, 155 were businessmen and bankers and 239 were lawyers, many of the lawyers also being involved in business. There were seventy—seven in education, thirty—three in the media, and ninety—seven in public service.

The fact that the largest group in Congress by far was composed of lawyers (about two—thirds of those classified as businessmen and bankers also had law degrees) pointed to another significant fact about America at the end of the 20th century. America might or might not be a country `under law,' as the Founding Fathers intended. It was certainly a country where lawyers held disproportionate power and influence compared to the rest of the population, and where the power of the courts was growing dramatically at the expense of the executive and the legislature. This important point needs examination in some detail. In the mid—1990s, both the President and his wife were law graduates, plus 42 percent of the House and 61 percent of the Senate (comparable figures for legislatures in other advanced countries average 18 percent). Lawyers were prominent in the Continental Congress and the whole independence movement, as they had been in the events leading up to the Civil War in England a century before—as was natural. (Indeed, lawyers had a big hand in Magna Carta in 1215.) But the subsequent growth in numbers and power in America, especially in the last quarter—century, had been dramatic. Between 1900

and 1970, the number of lawyers as a percentage of the growing population was fairly constant, at about 1.3 per thousand. Doctors were 1.8 per thousand. After 1970, lawyers outstripped doctors despite the increase in medical services, Medicare and Medicaid, and growing health—consciousness, because the demand for legal services rose still more sharply. By 1987 lawyers were 2.9 per thousand and by 1990 3.0 per thousand. In the quarter—century 1960—85, the population of the US grew by 30 percent and the number of lawyers by 130 percent. Equally significant was the increase in the number of lawyers resident in Washington DC in the quarter—century 1972—87, from 11,000 to 45,000.

The increase in the demand for legal services, and in litigation, was the product mainly of two factors: consciousness of rights, in an age when the courts, especially the Supreme Court, was stressing the importance and availability of rights; and, secondly, the increase in legislation, especially regulatory law demanding compliance and therefore posing complex legal problems for businesses and individuals. This factor can be measure by the number of pages in the Federal Register, which contains the various regulations put forward annually by the federal executive in response to Acts passed by the legislature. There were only 2,411 pages in 1936, at the height of the New Deal. By 1960 the total had crept up to 12,792. During the Kennedy Johnson era it leaped to 20,036, and during the 1970s, when Congress was on top, it shot up again to 87,012. Reagan reduced the flood to about 53,000 a year, but it rose again in 1991 to 67,716. The number of pages of Federal Reports, that is the transactions of the federal appeal courts, also rose, from 6,138 pages in 1936 to 49,907 pages in 1991. These increases far outstripped both the growth in GDP and, still more, the growth in population. This explained why, despite the huge increase in those entering the legal profession, from 1,000 women and 15,000 men a year in 1970, to 14,000 women and 22,000 men in 1985, average annual legal earnings kept up very well. Inevitably, this increase in lawyers, litigation, and legal work was parasitical on the economy as a whole. One 1989 study indicated that the optimum number of lawyers needed was only 60 percent of the existing total and that each additional lawyer joining the profession above this total reduced America’s GDP by $2.5 million.

More important, perhaps, the growth of litigation and of the number and importance of lawyers in society formed the background to a power bid by those right at the top of the legal profession: the justices of the Supreme Court. The growth of the federal judiciary in numbers had proceeded more than *pari passu* with the growth of federal government as a whole. By 1991 there were 600 federal district judges and 150 appeal judges, reflecting the quadrupling to 250,000 district cases, 1970—90, and the (almost) quadrupling of appeals in the same twenty years. Thanks to the rejection of FDR’s attempt to pack it, the Supreme Court remained at the same number, nine, and by refusing writs of certiorari the Court kept its cases more or less stable from 4,212 in 1970 to 4,990 in 1989. What was quite new was the importance and nature of some of its decisions, which made law and interpreted the

It is vital to grasp that the judicial tradition of the United States, as understood by the Founding Fathers, was based upon the English common law and statutory tradition, whereby judges interpreted common law and administered statute law. The English judges had interpreted the law in the light of the principle of equity, or fairness, which is a synonym for natural justice. But they had done so heeding the warning by Grotius (1583—1645), the Dutch founder of modern legal science, that equity should be no more than `the correction of that, wherein the law is deficient.’ This warning was amplified in the most solemn fashion by Sir William Blackstone (1723—80), the greatest of all English 18th—century jurists, whose teachings were very much

present in the minds of the Founding Fathers when they drew up the Declaration of Independence and wrote the Constitution of the United States. Blackstone said that judges must bear justice in mind as well as the law, but `The liberty of considering all cases in an equitable light must not be indulged too far, lest thereby we destroy all law, and leave the decision of every question entirely in the breast of the judge. And law, without equity, though hard and disagreeable, is much more desirable for the public good, than equity without law; which would make every judge a legislator, and introduce most infinite confusion.'

The American system, being based (unlike England's) on a written constitution, and needing to reconcile both federal law and laws passed by many states, necessarily involved some degree of judicial review of statutory law. This process was started by the Marshall Court in 1803, in *Marbury v. Madison*, which declared Section 13 of the 1789 Judiciary Act unconstitutional and therefore null and void. As we have seen, Marshall and his court played a crucial role in shaping the structure of the American legal system to admit the rapid and full development of capitalist enterprise. However, President Jefferson strongly opposed this role of the Court, President Jackson flatly refused to enforce the Court's mandate in *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832), and President Lincoln refused to comply with a variety of Court mandates and writs. Over 200 years, the Court, on the whole, while veering between `judicial restraint' and `judicial activism,' that is between a strict construction of what the Constitution means and a creative or equitable one, had been careful to follow Blackstone's warning.

A change, however, came in 1954, and that too had a complex background. Many American liberals had been dismayed by the fact that, despite emancipation, and despite the Fifteenth Amendment, guaranteeing all citizens the right to vote, blacks had failed to participate fully in American political life, especially in those states where they were most numerous, and the black community remained poor, badly educated, downtrodden, and supine. In 1937 the president of the Carnegie Foundation, Frederick Keppel, decided to finance a study of race relations. His colleague Beardsley Rumi persuaded him to get a Swedish politician called Gunnar Myrdal to do it. Myrdal received a grant of $300,000, an enormous sum in those days, and in due course he produced his findings, published in January 1944 as *An American Dilemma*, with 1,000 pages of text, 250 of notes, and ten appendices. Who was Gunnar Myrdal? He was, essentially, a disciple of Nietzsche and his theory of the Superman: Myrdal's belief that `Democratic politics are stupid' and `the masses are impervious to rational argument' led him to the social engineering of the Swedish Social Democrat Party, in which the enlightened elite took decisions on behalf of the people for their own good. Myrdal's book had a profound impact on the American intelligentsia. A 1960s survey of leading intellectuals conducted by the *Saturday Review*, asking what book over the past forty years had had the most influence, reported the finding that, apart from Keynes' *General Theory, An American Dilemma* topped the list, many of those questioned ranking it with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Tom Paine's *Common Sense* and De Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*.

Essentially Myrdal argued, and `proved' by his statistics, that America was too deeply racist a country for the wrongs of the blacks ever to be put right by Congressional action. Indeed, the book is a sustained attack on the inadequacies of the democratic process. It concludes by exhorting the Supreme Court to step in where democracy had failed and to apply `the spirit of the Reconstruction Amendments' to end segregation. The book became the bible of Thurgood Marshall (1908—93), head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense and Education Fund. Marshall retained as his chief strategist Nathan Margold, a disciple of justice Frankfurter. Margold belonged to the school of `legal realism,' arguing that

sociological approaches to the law ought to have priority over the `original intent' of constitutions and statutes, and of precedent, and that all legal decisions are, or ought to be, forms of social policy, to improve society. Margold's approach was to work on the element of legal realism already embedded in the Supreme Court by Frankfurter, and Myrdal's book, studied by the justices, was of critical importance in his campaign, because liberal judges in particular were enthusiastic about the Myrdal approach.

The result was perhaps the most important single Supreme Court decision in American history, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954), in which the Court unanimously ruled that segregated schools violated the Fourteenth Amendment guaranteeing equal protection under the law, and thus were unconstitutional. It is notable that, during the arguments, one of the justices, Robert Jackson, laid down: `I suppose that realistically the reason this case is here is that action couldn't be obtained by Congress.' Thus the judges were consciously stepping in to redeem what they saw as a failure of the legislature. The next year, in a pendant to the case, the Court issued guidelines for desegregating schools and vested federal courts with authority to supervise the process, urging that it take place `with all deliberate speed.' By setting itself up as an enforcement agency, the Court was thus substituting itself for what it regarded as a failed executive too. In short, in *Brown* the Court not only made law, but enforced it, and the enforcement was no small matter: as late as 1994 over 450 school districts remained under federal court supervision, and entire generations of children grew up in schools run not by the locally elected democratic authority but by judges in distant Washington.

Desegregation in the schools was reinforced by the Civil Rights Act of 1964, promoted by President Johnson in a famous speech to Congress on November 27, 1963: `We have talked long enough in this country about equal rights. We have talked for a hundred years or more. It is time now to write the next chapter, and to write it in the books of law.' That was what Congress did, exercising its proper constitutional function, and the Act itself was the result of democratic compromise in the legislature. Fearing Southern senators would filibuster the Bill into oblivion, LBJ made an alliance with Everett Dirksen of Illinois, the Republican Minority Leader, to get the measure through, in return for a key amendment. This specifically and plainly forbade racial quotas, thus rejecting the underlying philosophy of the Myrdal school of social engineering, which advocated `positive discrimination' and `affirmative action' to remedy the historic legacy of racism."' The Act was, on the whole, a notable success. But the manifest intentions of Congress, in enacting it, were distorted by the lawyers of the `legal realist' school. The Act created the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission as an enforcement agency. As it happened, in its first five years of operation, the Commission had no fewer than four chairmen, mostly absentee, and during this key period its *de facto* head was its compliance officer, a Rutgers law professor called Alfred W. Blumrosen. The Commission was directed by the Act to respond to complaints. Blumrosen brushed this provision aside and used the agency to take direct action by imposing quotas in defiance of the Act. He openly boasted of what he called his `free and easy ways with statutory construction' and praised the agency for working `in defiance of the laws governing its operation.'

This was the real beginning of Affirmative Action and it is worth remembering that it was based on illegality, as indeed was most of the racialism it was designed to correct. However, this defiance of the law was, as it were, legitimized on March 8, 1971 when the Supreme Court, in *Griggs v. Duke Power Company*, interpreted the 1964 Act in such a way as to make lawful discrimination in favor of what it termed `protected minorities.' The ruling gave such minorities an automatic presumption of discrimination, and so gave them standing to sue in court without

having to prove they had suffered from any discriminatory acts. Members of the majority, that is whites, and especially white males unprotected by discriminatory preferences in favor of females, were granted no similar standing in court to sue in cases of discrimination. Thus the principle of `equality before the law,' which in the Anglo—American tradition went back to Magna Carta in i215, was breached. Victims of reverse discrimination were disadvantaged in law, as was painfully demonstrated by the Randy Pech case in January 1991, when the US Attorney—General argued that Pech, being white, had no standing in court.

Many university courses on constitutional law (for example, at Georgetown, Washington DC), now begin with *Brown*, the line of instruction being that the Supreme Court, and other courts, were compelled, in the light of *Brown*, to take notice of social protest, such as demonstrations and riots—especially when these were ignored by Congress—in shaping decisions. The rise of legal triumphalism was opposed by a growing number of lawyers themselves. One of those who shaped the *Brown* decision, Alexander Bickel, who had been Frankfurter's clerk, repudiated it. Another, the NAACP litigation consultant Herbert Washsler, Columbia law professor, argued that *Brown* was an `unprincipled decision' that sacrificed neutral legal principles for a desired outcome. Raoul Berger, of Harvard, accused the Court of following the moral fallacy that the end justifies the means, usurping legislative power `on the grounds that there is no other way to be rid of an acknowledged evil.' Other experts argued that race, and its handling by the courts, was in danger of crowding out the proper political process altogether, and that race, quickly followed by ethnicity, was displacing citizenship as a badge of identity. Yet others pointed out that the *Brown* decision had not even worked as an act of *realpolitik*, since after thirty years the schools deteriorated even in the districts which were the original defendants in the case. In practice, the evidence showed, the judiciary could not produce desirable change: when it tried to do so it merely produced new forms of injustice. `Contrary to expectation,' as one critic put it, `[Brown] turned out to be a prelude to a major step backward in American race relations.'

Once the principle was established that it was lawful and constitutional to discriminate in favor of certain racial groups—and in some cases obligatory—a number of consequences followed. Race quotas were introduced in all government employment at the lower levels and in private industry under threat of government litigation: for example, AT&T increased the number of minority managers from 4.6 to 13.1 percent, 1973—82, and black employees at IBM rose from 750 in 1960 to 16,564 in 1980. An enormous race—quota compliance bureaucracy grew up: the Civil Rights Commission, the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission, the Labor Department's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, the Office of Minority Business Enterprise, and large civil rights offices within federal departments such as justice, Defense and Health, Education and Welfare. Curiously enough, this burgeoning race relations industry, employing tens of thousands of people, treated itself as exempt from the quotas, based on demographics, which it was imposing on the rest of society, and employed an overwhelming majority of blacks and other minority groups in workforces, though it did employ some whites, especially if they were women. This formidable bureaucratic army became the core of the Civil Rights Lobby in Washington. And the lobby was, in effect, led by the judges themselves, who in some cases were quite frank about what they were doing: `Certainly a majority of the educated elite,' said Richard Neely, Chief Justice of the West Virginia Supreme Court,

> as reflected by the attitudes of the faculties, trustees and student bodies at major universities, consider affirmative action, though predatory, morally justifiable. It is just as certain, however, that a majority of Americans disapprove. There is no theoretical justification for continued support of affirmative action other than the elitist one that the courts know from their superior education that

> affirmative action is necessary in the short run to achieve the generally applauded moral end of equal opportunity in the long run. That is probably not illegitimate, since judges are social science specialists and have available to them more information and have pursued the issue with more thought and diligence than the man in the street.

This blunt statement of judicial triumphalism occurred in a book appropriately titled *How the Courts Govern America*.

Unfortunately, courts cannot govern, because that is not their function, and the result of judicial aggression was to make America not more, but less, governable. Instituting race quotas merely stimulated more forms of direct action, including more rioting. Introducing inequality before the law merely helped to undermine the legal process itself. Mesmerized by the philosophy of quotas and reverse discrimination, majority black juries began to refuse to convict where blacks were accused of murdering whites (especially, in New York, white Jews). Families of whites murdered by blacks were forced to resort to civil processes to secure a remedy in cases where racially determined verdicts deprived them of justice. And where whites (especially white policemen) were acquitted on charges of murdering blacks, huge black riots forced retrials. Both these last two types of case breached another fundamental axion of the law, that no accused may be tried twice for the same crime.

Nor did the disturbing consequences end there. America became in danger of embracing a caste system, like India or, worse still, of obliging itself to set up the juridical infrastructure of a racist state, like Hitler's Germany. With the beginning of large—scale non—European immigration in the late 1960s as a result of the 1965 Immigration Reform Act, entrants from Europe fell from over 50 percent, 1955—64, to less than 10 percent in 1985—90, while Third World entrants rose rapidly. This opened an opportunity for lobbies to create new categories of `disadvantaged minorities.' Thus the Mexican—American Legal Defense and Education Fund, a powerful interest—group in alliance with the Democratic Party, succeeded in establishing a racial category known as `Hispanic,' which included latin mestizos, people of predominantly European, black, and American Indian descent, descendants of long—assimilated Californios and Tejanos, and other groups who once spoke Spanish—almost anyone in fact who found it advantageous to belong, so long as they could not be accused of being `Caucasian' or `Aryan.' This pseudo—race came into existence as the result of statistical classification by bureaucrats. Nor was it the only one. In 1973 Washington asked the Federal Interagency Committee on Education to produce consistent rules for classifying Americans by ethnicity and race. The FICE produced a five—race classification: American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, White, and Hispanic. Oddly enough, at the insistence of the Office of Management and Budget, Asian Indians, who had been upgraded to White by a Supreme Court decision in 1913, then downgraded by another Supreme Court decision in 1923, were downgraded still further to the Asian and Pacific Islander category in the late 1970s, and were delighted at the result since it meant that all of them, including high—caste Hindus, could qualify for radical preference. The new racial code was adopted in Statistical Directive 15.

The new American race code began to experience these kinds of difficulties from the 1980s, when membership of certain categories brought immediate financial and other advantages. Thus the City of San Francisco laid down that 80 percent of its legal services had to be conducted by Asians, Latinos, blacks, or women, a process known as setasides, then discovered that some of these categories were fronting for white firms. But that was a point difficult to prove. Equally, a white who claimed to be five—eighths Indian could not easily be convicted of fraud even if he did so to get a set—aside contract. Moreover, the rise in interracial marriage produced large

numbers of mixed—race citizens who, from the early 1990s, were demanding the creation of a statistical mixed—race category, or categories, with corresponding privileges. This was what happened to the originally simple race code of the 18th—century British Caribbean colonies, which ended up with eight groups—negro, sambo (mulatto/negro), mulatto (white male/negress), quadroon (white male/mulatto female), mustee (white male/quadroon or Indian), mustifini (white male/mustee), quintroon (white male/mustifini) and octaroon (white male/quintroon)—before collapsing in confusion. At one time there were 492 different race categories in Brazil before the system was abandoned, as was apartheid, as unworkable.

It was distressing to see the United States, the model democratic and egalitarian republic, go down that retrograde road. But meanwhile the system spread. Political gerrymandering to benefit racial minorities began in the wake of the Voting Rights Act (1965) and was extended by amendments to the Act in 1975. After the 1990 census, black majority Congressional districts rose from seventeen to thirty—two and Hispanic from nine to twenty, and in the 1992 elections membership of the Black Caucus jumped from twenty—six to thirty—nine, as a direct result of gerrymandering on a racial basis. Affirmative Action in universities led to massive lowering of admission standards in such key schools as medicine. Thus, by the early 1990s, less than half of black medical—school graduates passed their National Board Exams for medical certification, compared to 88 percent among whites. From the late 1960s, more and more universities offered courses and/or degrees in Afro—American Studies, African Identity, Afro—Awareness, Afrocentricity, and related topics. Howard University, chartered by Act of Congress in 1867 and long regarded as America's best predominantly black college, formed an enormous Department of African Studies and Research, listing sixty—five courses, including African Political Thought, Africa and the World Economy, Political Organization of the African Village, African Social History, Educational Systems in Africa, plus courses in such African languages as Ibo, Wolof, Lingala, Swahili, Xhosa, Zulu, Amharis, and Algerian Arabic. Some of the courses made academic sense, others did not. There was a good deal of fabricated Afro—centered history, which included reclassifying Hannibal as a `black warrior,' Cleopatra as a `black African queen,' categorizing the Ancient Egyptians as black, and assigning to them the ultimate origins of Western civilization.

This racist approach to learning was based upon the assumption, treated as a truth to be `held as self—evident,' and which underlay both official policies of Affirmative Action and the new university curricula, that blacks were by definition incapable of racism, which was historically a creation of white color prejudice. Hence the Black Caucus in Congress was not merely not racist but actually anti—racist. Equally, a $420 million donation to Yale University in 1995 to finance a course on Western Civilization was rejected, under pressure from interest groups, on the ground that such a course was, by definition, racist. One paladin of the new learning, Professor Leonard Jeffries, head of the Afro—American Studies Department at City College, New York, taught that whites were biologically inferior to blacks, that Jews financed the slave trade, and that the `ultimate culmination' of the `white value system' was Nazi Germany. Jeffries' students were informed that white genes were deformed in the Ice Age, producing an inadequate supply of melanin, which in turn made whites capable of appalling crimes, while black genes were enhanced by `the value system of the sun.' Other self—evident truths were unveiled by Professor Becky Thompson, head of the Women's Studies Department at Braandeis University—the college named after the first Jew to attain the Supreme Court—who described to a meeting of the American Sociological Association her teaching methodology: `I begin the course with the basic feminist principle that in a racist, classist and sexist society we have all swallowed oppressive

ways of being, whether intentionally or not. Specifically, this means that it is not open to debate whether a white student is racist or a male student is sexist. He/she simply is. Rather, the focus is on the social forces that keep these distortions in place.'

The growth of political indoctrination and malign race—theory was part of a phenomenon known as `Political Correctness,' which swept the American campus in the 1980s and early 1990s, rather as protest swept it in the 1960s. As in the Sixties, some escaped the disease, others were heavily infected, some succumbed. The worst aspect of PC, critics complained, was not its foolishness but its intolerance, and its tendency to stifle free speech. Thus, a classic statement of PC was the `Policy on Harassment,' drawn up by President John Casteen of the University of Connecticut and printed in its *Students' Handbook*, 1989—90. This urged black, Hispanic, and female students to report all derogatory remarks they heard to the authorities, and it ordered those administering the complaints procedure to `avoid comments that dissuade victims from pursuing their rights' since `such behavior is itself discriminatory and a violation of the policy.' Casteen went on to become president of the University of Virginia, founded by Thomas Jefferson. Conduct like that of Casteen might be greeted with derision by the outside world but during this period large numbers of students were expelled from universities for behavior or remarks judged to be politically incorrect, and some university teachers lost their jobs. PC persecutions were in the long American tradition of the Salem witchhunts, the Hollywood blacklist, and other manifestations of religious or ideological fervor overriding the principles of natural justice.

There was also concern that at a time when more American young people were attending university than ever before, the quality of what they were taught was being lowered by ideological factors. One of the characteristics of PC, and its associated theory, Deconstruction—an import from Europe but pursued more relentlessly on American campuses—was the legitimation of popular culture as a subject of study, children's comics being placed on the same level as Shakespeare or Melville. The switch to `pop' had moral overtones too. Professor Houston Baker of the University of Pennsylvania, founded by Benjamin Franklin but in the 1990s a center of PC, argued that `Reading and writing are merely technologies of control' or `martial law made academic.' Students should be taught to listen to `the voice of newly emerging peoples' and especially their music, such as Rap. He cited such groups as Public Enemy and Niggaz Wit' Attitude, the last singing lyrics about the need for violence against white people. In the decade 1985—95, Rap became the favorite kind of music for black students on campus (and many white ones also), who liked its tendency to treat the police as enemies to be killed. One 1990s campus hero was Tupac Shakur, whose albums sold millions of copies and whose movies were cult—properties, openly praised crime and urged the killing of police officers. Since 1991 he had been arrested eight times for violence, served eight months in prison for sexual abuse, was accused of shooting two policemen, and was finally shot to death himself on September 13, 1996, by unknown assailants in Las Vegas. In 1991 Rap, especially its most menacing version, Gangsta Rap, accounted for 10 percent of all records sold in America, and Shakur's label, Death Row (its logo portrays a gangster hero strapped into an electric chair) sold 18 million records and grossed more than $l00 million.

All this seemed to be part of a process of downward mobility which, as we have seen, first became an American phenomenon in the 1920s and picked up speed from the 1960s onwards. The critical literature of the 1980s and 1990s was crowded with works complaining about the 'dumbing down' of America—a 1933 Hollywood phrase used for preparing screenplays for

semi—literates. A 1987 bestseller by Allan Bloom of the University of Chicago was *The Closing of the American Mind*, subtitled `How higher education has failed democracy and impoverished the souls of today's students.' A complementary work, from 1991, by Roger Kimball, *Tenured Radicals: How Politics Has Corrupted our Higher Education*, drew attention in particular to the omission of facts and entire subjects from university courses for fear that they might `offend' a particular racial group. A Harvard professor of ichthyology told a meeting organized by AWARE (Actively Working Against Racism and Ethnocentrism), one of the PC enforcement agencies, that a teacher should never `introduce any sort of thing that might hurt a group' because `the pain that racial insensitivity can create was more important than a professor's academic freedom.' And emasculation or falsification of courses, from history to biology, for fear of causing offense was merely one example of the way in which education, it was claimed, was being infantilized by politics. The monthly review the *New Criterion*, founded in 1982 precisely to combat both the decay of culture and deliberate assaults on its standards, drew attention repeatedly to the corrosive process in art and architecture, music, and letters.

One target of attack was the American language. The use of English, with its enormous vocabulary, matchless capacity to invent and adapt new words, and subtlety of grammar and syntax, had always been one of the great strengths of American culture and society. The emergence of the United States as the first really big free—trade area in the world, so important to its expansion and industrialization in the 19th century, was due in large part to the coherence provided by a common language, pronounced (and, thanks to Webster, spelled) in the same way over an area the size of Europe. Webster distinguished between the New England dialect, Southern dialect, and General American; and Professor Hans Kurath, working in the 1940s, distinguished between eighteen `speech areas,' elaborated in the *Linguistic Atlas of the United States and Canada*, publication of which began in the 1950s. But the use of English by Americans was, on the whole, remarkably uniform, and all Americans could usually understand each other well, something which could not always be said for Britain. The effectiveness of American use of English was of growing importance at the end of the 20th century since by the mid—1990s over 2 billion people throughout the world spoke English as their first, second, or commercial language; not only was this number growing but more and more of those learning it were acquiring it in its American idiom.

Acquisition of English was a vital part of the melting—pot process and, equally, non—English speakers arriving in America as immigrants, in the process of learning it, added to its richness, a point powerfully made by Henry James in a talk he gave at Bryn Mawr College on June 8, 1905: `The thing they may do best is to play, to their heart's content, with the English language [and] dump their mountains of promiscuous material into the foundation of the American ... they have just as much property in our speech as we have and just as much right to do what they choose with it.' However, James pressed strongly for common pronunciation and what he called `civility of utterance,' warning against `influences round about us that make for ... the confused, the ugly, the flat, the thin, the mean, the helpless, that reduce articulation to an easy and ignoble minimum, and so keep it as little distinct as possible from the grunting, the squealing, the barking or roaring of animals.' James called the correct pronunciation of English `the good cause,' and it had to be based on constant reading: a true culture was a literary culture, and a purely aural culture was bound to degenerate into a mindless and unimaginative demotic. One of the characteristics of downward mobility, often reinforced by Political Correctness and Deconstruction, was precisely the stress on the aural as opposed to the written and printed.

Attempts to teach children to speak and write ‘correct’ English were treated as `elitist’ or even `racist,’ since the very notion of one form of English being `correct’ was ‘oppressive.’

One form of this aural dumbing down was the proposal by the School Board in Oakland, California, that Ebonics be recognized as a distinct language and used for teaching purposes. Ebonics, a compound from ebony and phonetics, was a fancy name for black street—speech, based partly on contraction (‘You know what I am saying?’ becomes ‘Nomesame?’ and `What’s up?’ becomes `Sup?’), and partly on special use of words (woman/lady/girl is `bitch,’ kill is `wet,’ nice is `butter,’ teeth is `grill,’ money is `cream,’ foot/friend/man is dog/dawg/dogg), and partly on inversion (ugly is `pretty,’ intelligent is `stupid,’ beautiful is `mad’). The proposal, made in January 1997, was attacked by black opinion leaders, as well as white ones, but it sprang from a growing tendency among some educationists to regard the acquisition of ‘correct’ skills in English as an unjust form of cultural property, to be corrected by Affirmative Action. This took many forms, in the 1980s and 1990s, including the right of ethnic minorities to be taught in their own languages and, more seriously, the right of Spanish, as the language of the Hispanic minority, to be given status as an official alternative to English. Signs in Spanish as well as English at US airports and other places of entry, which came as a shock to Americans returning to their own country, indicated the extent to which this new doctrine was being adopted. Those who advocated a multilingual as well as a multicultural America—a ‘Waldorf Salad’ as opposed to the melting—pot, to use one popular simile—were seemingly unaware of the fearful cost of internal linguistic disputes in countries unfortunate enough to be plagued by them, from Sri Lanka to Burundi to Belgium.

The prospect of plunging the United States into linguistic civil wars would not have deterred some rights enthusiasts. The bible of the rights lobby, John Rawls’ *A Theory o f Justice* (1971), argued that justice was categorically paramount, superior to any other consideration, so that one aspect of justice could be sacrificed only to another aspect, not to any other desired goal. Rawls argued that a policy which benefited the entire human race except one should not be adopted (even if that one person was unharmed) because that would be an `unjust’ distribution of the benefits of the policy. This anti—realist approach was attacked most persuasively by America’s leading philosopher, Thomas Sowell, himself a black, in his libertarian cult—book, *Knowledge and Decisions* (1980), who argued that rights were more firmly based in practice on easy access to property with its self—interested monitoring. He quoted Adam Smith, who argued that some degree of justice (possibly a high degree) was necessary for any of the other desirable features of society to exist but increments of justice did not necessarily outrank increments of other desirables—such a belief was doctrinaire and counterproductive. That, it seemed, was true of the whole drive for rights: to press everyone’s notional rights to their logical conclusion led not to their attainment, since there was not enough justice to go round, but merely to a conflict of rights.

This became more and more apparent as Affirmative Action was applied. Statistics began to accumulate showing clearly that `racial preferences,’ applied by law, benefited well—off blacks and Hispanics at the expense of the poor of all races. And there were many individual cases of injustice. Thomas Wood, executive director of the California Association of Scholars, said he was denied a job solely because he was a white male. He was one of a group of people who drafted the 1996 California Initiative, Proposition 209, to amend the state’s Constitution to prohibit use of quotas by California’s state institutions. The phrasing of the Initiative was modeled on the 1964 Civil Rights Act and it passed by a substantial majority in November 1996. This democratic decision by a 30—million electorate was promptly blocked by Federal Judge

Thelton Handerson, a black with close links to the radical left, who issued an injunction to prevent its enforcement, on the ground there was a `strong probability' that the law would be proved 'unconstitutional' when it reached the Supreme Court. This in turn provoked a comment from Professor Sowell, a supporter of Proposition 209: `Is there nothing left other than the choice between quietly surrendering democracy and refusing to obey a court order?'

The likelihood that the usurpation by the judiciary of the powers of the legislature would provoke violence was demonstrated by the consequences of the decision by the Supreme Court in the case of *Roe v. Wade*. On January 22, 1973, the Court ruled (seven to two) that the option of choosing an abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy was a fundamental constitutional privilege. The direct implication of the ruling was that all state laws forbidding abortion were unconstitutional and void. The ruling was regarded by many as an extraordinary piece of judicial sophistry since it was based on the assumption that the Fourteenth Amendment, guaranteeing personal liberty as part of due process, encompassed a right to privacy which was violated by antiabortion laws. Protest against the tenuous logic behind the Court's decision was reinforced by strong moral and religious feelings among people who held abortion to be wrong irrespective of what the Constitution or the courts said, just as in the 19th century millions of Americans held slavery to be wrong although both Court and Constitution held it was within the rights of states to uphold it.

As a result of the Court's decision, abortions became available on request for any reason and 30 million were performed up to the early 1990s, when they were taking place at the rate of 1,600,000 a year. The justification for this wholesale destruction, without any democratic mandate and at the behest of unelected judges, was that the sheer number of terminations indicated that women as a whole, half the population, evidently acquiesced in the process. But an August 1996 study by the Planned Parenthood Association, itself a pro—abortion institution, indicated that many women had at least two abortions and that the 30 million were concentrated in certain groups, especially blacks and unmarried white women cohabitating with a man or men. The great majority of American women had no recourse to abortion at all in their lifetimes.

The strength of anti—abortion feeling, which appeared to be growing as new scanning techniques demonstrated the early point in pregnancy at which the fetus became a recognizable human being, recalled the anti—slavery campaigns of the period 1820—60. As with the efforts to end slavery, the anti—abortion cause became quiescent and underground for a time, then resurfaced with added fury. It was an issue, in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, which would not go away and it tended to be expressed with more violence as time went by, as indeed was the slavery debate. The anti—abortionists, or pro—lifers as they called themselves, often worked in secret and operated the equivalent of the antislavery `underground,' as well as including homicidal extremists like John Brown and his sons. Between 1987 and 1994, over 72,000 protesters were arrested for picketing abortion clinics, and some were jailed for up to two and a half years for non—violent actions chiefly consisting of chanting and prayer. In 1994, under pressure from the ProChoice Lobby, Congress passed the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act, making peaceful picketing a federal crime punishable by ten years in prison. That did not deter the anti—abortionists: far from it. By the end of 1996 there had been 148 fire—bombings of clinics and a number of doctors specializing in late abortions had been shot or stabbed to death with their own instruments; receptionists had been killed too. Protection and rising insurance costs compelled many clinics to shut down, and in some areas (the Dakotas, for instance, and the Deep South) doctors were no longer willing to perform abortions, which tended increasingly to be concentrated in a few large cities. In January 1997 a new level of violence was reached when

an abortion clinic in Atlanta was devastated by a large bomb, and a second, booby—trapped bomb was detonated when firefighters, journalists, and federal agents arrived on the scene. The fall in the number of abortions carried out every year, from 1.6 to 1.4 million, proclaimed by the pro—life organizations as the `saving' of 200,000 lives annually, indicated the effects of the campaign of violence. Like the emancipationists in the 19th century, the pro—lifers discovered that force was more likely to produce results than due process or voting.

That the Supreme Court, albeit inadvertently, should provoke high—principled citizens into resorting to violence was a serious matter in a society already facing a seemingly intractable problem of crime, especially crimes of violence. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the United States did not keep national crime statistics, but local ones suggest there was a decline in crime in the second half of the 19th century (except for a few years after the Civil War). This decline continued well into the 20th century. There was even a decline in homicides in large cities, where such crimes were most common: Philadelphia's homicide rate fell from 3.3 per 100,000 population in c. 1850 to 2.1 in 1900. US national crime statistics became available in 1960, when the rate for all crimes was revealed as under 1,900 per 100,000 population. That doubled in the 1960s and tripled in the 1970s. A decline in the early 1980s was followed by a rise to 5,800 per 100,000 in 1990. In crimes of murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, the rise was steeper, fivefold from 1960 to 1992. The US Justice Department calculated in 1987 that eight out of every ten Americans would be victims of violent crime at least once in their lives. In 1992 alone one in four US households experienced a non—violent crime. In what was called `the demoralization of American society,' a number of statistical indicators came together. In the thirty years 1960—90, while the US population rose by 41 percent, there was a 560 percent increase in violent crime, 200 percent in teenage suicide, zoo percent rise in divorce, over 400 percent rise in illegitimate births, 300 percent rise in children living in single—parent homes—producing *in toto* the significant fact that children formed the fastest—growing segment of the criminal population. During this period, welfare spending had gone up in real terms by 630 percent and education spending by 225 percent.

The rapid rise in violent crime inevitably produced a corresponding rise in the prison population. In 1993, for instance, 1.3 million Americans were victims of gun—related crimes. Guns were used in 29 percent of the 4.4 million murders, rapes, robberies, and serious assaults in the US in 1993, an 11 percent increase over the previous year. In the year ending June 30, 1995 the prison population grew by nearly 9 percent, the largest increase in American history. As of June 30, 1994, there were a million people in US jails for the first time, double the number in 1984. By the mid—1990s, one in 260 Americans was imprisoned for terms of over a year, with another 440,000 awaiting trial or serving shorter sentences. Of the 90 percent in state prisons 93 percent were violent or repeat offenders. A quarter of federal and a third of state prisoners came from `criminal families' (that is, a close family member had already been jailed). The growth in the prison population was itself the result of `prison as last resort' policies. Courts were not anxious to send anyone to jail. Evidently there were few innocents locked away. In 1992, for instance, of the 10.3 million violent crimes committed in America, only 165,000 led to convictions and of these only 100,000 led to prison sentences. Less than one convicted criminal was sent to prison for every hundred violent crimes. Nearly all those sent to prison were violent offenders, repeat offenders, or repeat violent offenders.

In the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, as crime multiplied, there were many improvements in policing, which sometimes produced results and sometimes were aborted by political factors.

Thus the Los Angeles Police Department, so corrupt in the 1930s and 1940s that Raymond Chandler's brilliant fictions about its operations actually underestimated the problem, was transformed into an honest and efficient force under two brilliant chiefs, William Parker and his successor Thomas Redden, but set back decades by the highly politicized l992 riots and their consequences. In many US big cities, such as Los Angeles, the high proportion of blacks convicted of crimes—the 12 percent of blacks in the total population produced 50—60 percent of homicide arrests, 50 percent of rape arrests, almost 60 percent of robbery arrests, and 40—50 percent of aggravated—assault arrests—meant that the antiracial lobby tended to treat the police as the `enemy' and bring political factors to bear against efficient crime—prevention.

In 1990, a Boston police expert, Bill Bratton, was appointed head of New York's subway police and introduced the `zero tolerance' policy of arresting and prosecuting in even minor cases. This worked so well that in 1993, when the federal prosecutor Rudolph Giuliani was elected mayor of New York, he gave Bratton the opportunity to apply the strategy to the city as a whole, and the results were impressive. In 1993—5, violent and property crimes dropped 26 percent in New York, murders by teenagers dropped 28 percent, car theft 46 percent, robbery 41 percent, and murder 49 percent. New York, with 3 percent of the population, accounted for one—third of the fall in reported crimes in three years. In 1996 the city reported fewer murders than at any time since 1968. But, though more effective policing helped, abetted by underlying demographic factors, such as a rise in the average age of the population, most studies agreed that a radical improvement in the level of crime in America would depend on the return to a more religious or moralistic culture. Historians have always noted that organized religion had proved the best form of social control in Western societies.

In the light of this, it may strike future historians as strange that, in the second half of the 20th century, while public sin, or crime, was rising fast, the authorities of the state, and notably the courts—and especially the Supreme Court—did everything in their power to reduce the role of religion in the affairs of the state, and particularly in the education of the young, by making school prayers unlawful and unconstitutional, and by forbidding even such quasi—religious symbols as Christmas trees and nativity plays on school premises. This raised a historical point of some importance about the status of religious belief in American life. We have seen how important, right from the outset, was the force of religion in shaping American society. Until the second half of the 20th century, religion was held by virtually all Americans, irrespective of their beliefs or non—belief, to be not only desirable but an essential part of the national fabric. It is worth recalling De Tocqueville's observation that Americans held religion `to be indispensable to the maintenance of free institutions.' Religion was identified first with republicanism, then with democracy, so as to constitute the American way of life, the set of values, and the notions of private and civil behavior which Americans agreed to be self—evidently true and right. In consequence, those who preached such values from the pulpit or who most clearly, even ostentatiously, upheld them from the pews, were acknowledged to be among the most valuable citizens of the country. Whereas in Europe, religious practice and fervor were often, even habitually, seen as a threat to freedom, in American they were seen as its underpinning. In Europe religion was presented, at any rate by the majority of its intellectuals, as an obstacle to `progress;' in America, as one of its dynamics.

From the 1960s, this huge and important difference between Europe and America was becoming blurred, perhaps in the process of disappearing altogether. It was one way in which America was losing its uniqueness and ceasing to be the City on the Hill. For the first time in American history there was a widespread tendency, especially among intellectuals, to present

religious people as enemies of freedom and democratic choice. There was a further tendency among the same people to present religious beliefs of any kind which were held with certitude, and religious practice of any kind which was conducted with zeal, as `fundamentalist,' a term of universal abuse. There was a kind of adjectival ratchet—effect at work in this process. The usual, normal, habitual, and customary moral beliefs of Christians and Jews were first verbally isolated as `traditionalist,' then as `orthodox,' next as 'ultraorthodox,' and finally as `fundamentalist' (with 'obscurantist' added for full measure), thought they remained the same beliefs all the time. It was not the beliefs which had altered but the way in which they were regarded by non—believers or anti—believers, not so much by those who did not share them as by those who objected to them. This hostile adjectival inflation marked the changed perspective of many Americans, the new conviction that religious beliefs as such, especially insofar as they underpinned moral certitudes, constituted a threat to freedom. Its appearance was reflected in the extreme secularization of the judiciary, and the academy, and the attempt to drive any form of religious activity, however nominal or merely symbolic, right outside the public sector. Such a change was new and potentially dangerous for it was a divisive force, a challenge to the moral and religious *oikumene* or consensus which had been so central a part of America's democratic unity and strength.

This development produced a hostile atmosphere which specially affected the mainline American Protestant churches, the so—called `Seven Sisters:' the American Baptist Churches of the USA, the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ), the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church. In order to exist in the hostile secular atmosphere, the churches liberalized and to some extent secularized themselves. That in turn led them to alienate rank—and—file members. The Seven Sisters remained apparently strong in terms of the American establishment. Every single president came, in theory at least, from the mainliners, except Kennedy (Catholic) and Carter (Southern Baptist). Of the Supreme Court justices from 1789 to 1992, some 55 out of 112 were Episcopalians or Presbyterians. Representation in Congress was also disproportionate: in the 1oIst, for instance, one—fifth of the senators were Episcopalians, ten times their proportion in the general population. The 10th contained sixty—eight Baptists (mostly mainliners), sixty—four Methodists, sixty—three Episcopalians, fifty—nine Presbyterians, and forty—three Lutherans.

This over—representation at the top, and the fact that some of these churches retained considerable wealth—in American Christianity as a whole, the top income— and property—owners are the Disciples of Christ, the Congregationalists, the Episcopalians, and the Presbyterians—did not disguise the fact that all seven were in rapid decline. Indeed they had been effectively in decline throughout the 20th century, though the rate had increased markedly since the end of the 1960s, when church attendance began to dip below its historical high. One study, for instance, calculated that the Methodists had been losing 1,000 members a week for thirty years. The Seven Sisters as a whole lost between a fifth and a third of their members in the years 1960—90, chiefly because they forfeited their distinguishing features, or indeed any features. After the Episcopal Church's General Convention of 1994, marked by a bitter dispute over the right of practicing homosexuals to become or remain clergy, one official observer commented: `The Episcopal Church is an institution in free fall. We have nothing to hold onto, no shared belief, no common assumptions, no bottom line, no accepted definition of what an Episcopalian is or believes.'

By 1994, the Seven Sisters were listed as having membership as follows: American Baptist Churches 1.5 million, Disciples of Christ 605,996, Episcopal church 1.6 million, Lutheran Church 3.8 million, Presbyterians 2.7 million, United Church of Christ 1.5 million, and United Methodists 8.5 million. By contrast, the Roman Catholics, who had been America's biggest single denomination since 1890, numbered over 6o million in the mid—1990s, the Southern Baptists 16.6 million, and the Mormons 4.1 million. These churches were still clear about their identities and distinguishing features, taught specific doctrines and maintained, though not without difficulty, especially among the Catholics, their coherence and morale. In addition there were a large number of Christian churches, both new and distantly derived from the various Awakenings, whose followers were difficult to quantify but who collectively numbered more than 50 million. Many of these churches raised their numbers and provided finance by effective use of network, local, and cable TV and radio. Some were represented on the main religious political pressure—group, the Christian Leadership Conference, which had over 1,300 branches by 1996 and was believed to influence and (in some cases) control the Republican Party in all fifty states. This grouping, together with the Catholics, constituted the more assertive face of American Christianity, still powerful in the nation as a whole, the heart of the `moral majority.' During the late 1980s and 1990s, there was growing cooperation, a form of grassroots ecumenism, between the Protestant churches, the Catholics, the Jews (numbering slightly below 6 million in the mid—1990s), and even the Moslems, Buddhists, and Hindus, in seeking to promote traditional moral values.

Nevertheless, the decline and demoralization of mainstream Protestantism was an important fact of American life at the end of the 20th century. The average age of members of these churches rose rapidly, from fifty in 1983 to about sixty in the mid—1990s, indicating a failure to retain children in the fold (by contrast with the conservative Protestant groups, which pay special attention to instructing families as a whole). One index was the decline of `giving,' down from 3.5 percent of income in 1968 to 2.97 percent in 1993, lower than it was at the bottom of the Great Depression. In 1992—4, Americans spent less on maintaining Protestant ministries, $2 billion a year, than on firearms and sporting guns, $2.48 billion, illegal drugs, $49 billion, legal gambling, nearly $40 billion, alcohol, $44 billion, leisure travel, $40 billion, and cosmetics, $20 billion. It is true that outright gifts to religious foundations and purposes remained enormous: $58.87 billion in 1994, making it by far the top charitable priority for Americans: gifts to education, at $16.71 billion, were much lower. But routine support, whether by sustaining or attending churches, was waning. This led to large—scale sackings of permanent staff, especially in the Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Episcopal churches. The theologian Stanley Hauerwas of Duke Divinity School summed it up in 1993: `God is killing mainline Protestantism in America and we goddam deserve it.'

In general, the decline of the mainstream churches was most pronounced in the large cities and the former industrial areas and centers of population. It was an important factor in what, to many analysts of American society, was the decisive single development in America during the second half of the 20th century: the decline of the family and of family life, and the growth in illegitimacy. The enormous number of children born outside the family structure altogether, or raised in one—parent families, appeared to be statistically linked to most of the modern evils of American life: poor educational performance and illiteracy or semi—literacy, children out on the streets from an early age, juvenile delinquency, unemployment, adult crime, and, above all, poverty. The breakdown or even total absence of the marriage/family system, and the growth of

illegitimacy, was right at the heart of the emergence of an underclass, especially the black underclass.

One of America's most perceptive social critics, Daniel P. Moynihan (later Senator for New York), drew attention to the growing weakness of the family as a prime cause of black poverty as early as the 1960s, in the so—called 'Moynihan Report.' The theme was taken up, and amplified, in the writings of Charles Murray, whose book *The Bell Curve* was an important—and controversial—contribution to the social analysis of America in the 1990s. This book was sensationalized and attacked on publication because it summarized a mass of statistical material to point out important differences in average IQs between racial categories, and this in turn undermined the permitted parameters of discussion of the race problem laid down by the liberal consensus. But such criticisms missed the main point of the analysis, which was to stress human differences of all kinds, including those arising from marriage and non—marriage and the existence or not of a family structure.'" Murray drew attention to the rise of what he called a `cognitive elite,' based on intermarriage between people of high intelligence, producing children far more likely to do well in a period when `the ability to use and manipulate information has become the single most important element of success.' This structured overclass was accompanied, at the other end of the social spectrum, by an underclass where marriage was rare and illegitimacy the norm.

Up to 1920, the proportion of children born to single women in the United States was less than 3 percent, roughly where it had been throughout the history of the country. The trendline shifted upwards, though not dramatically, in the 1950s. A steep, sustained rise gathered pace in the mid—1960s and continued into the early 1990s, to reach 30 percent in 1991. In 1960 there were just 73,000 never—married mothers between the ages of eighteen and thirty—four. By 1980 there were 1 million. By 1990 there were 2.9 million. Thus, though the illegitimacy ratio rose six times in thirty years, the number of never—married mothers rose forty times. Illegitimacy was far more common among blacks than among whites. The difference in black—white marriage rates was small until the 1960s and then widened, so that by 1991 only 38 percent of black women aged 15—44 were married, compared to 58 percent of white women. A significant difference between the number of black illegitimate children and white ones went back to well before the 1960s, though it increased markedly after the 1960s watershed. In 1960, 24 percent of black children were illegitimate, compared with 2 percent of white children. By 1991, the figures of illegitimate births were 68 percent of all births for blacks, 39 percent for Latinos, and 18 percent for non—Latino whites. At some point between 1960 and 1990, marriage, and having children within marriage, ceased to be the norm among blacks, while remaining the norm among whites (though a deteriorating one). The jump in the illegitimacy rate in 1991 was the largest so far recorded, but it was exceeded by subsequent years. By the end of 1994 it was 33 percent for the nation as a whole, 25 percent for whites, and 70 percent for blacks. In parts of Washington, capital of the richest nation in the world, it was as high as 90 percent.

The alarming acceleration in illegitimacy was probably the biggest single factor in persuading Congress to legislate to end the existing Aid to Families with Dependent Children program, and President Clinton to sign the Bill into law. The AFDC system was widely regarded as an encouragement to women to eschew marriage and have illegitimate children to qualify for federal support, and ending it a precondition of tackling the decline in marriage. However, some critics, notably Senator Moynihan himself, thought it cruel, having created the illegitimacy—dependency culture, to end it suddenly for existing beneficiaries. What had emerged by the second half of the 1990s, however, was that the conventional remedies for racial and class

deprivation—improving civil rights and spending money in huge quantities on welfare programs—did not work. The war on poverty had failed. Now the war to restore marriage to its centrality in American life had begun.

In that war, the rise of women to positions of genuine equality in American life might seem, at first glance, an impediment. The more women succeeded in life, the less priority they accorded to marriage, children, and the home. A 1995 study by Claudia Goldin of the National Bureau of Economic Research found that only about 15 percent of women who had received college degrees c. 1972 were still maintaining both career and family by the mid—1990s. Among those with a successful career, indicated by income level, nearly 50 percent were childless. Career and marriage seemed alternatives, not complements. But women had always adopted different strategies in fighting their way to the front, or into happiness. In the 1920s, Dorothy Parker (1893—1967) had created for herself a special upper—class accent of her own—'Finishing—school talk but not the Brearley accent, not the West Side private school accent but a special little drawl that was very attractive'—and used it to become the first American woman who could swear with impunity and make sexual wisecracks: `She hurt her leg sliding down a barrister;' `She wouldn't hurt a fly—Not if it was buttoned up;' `We were playing ducking for apples—There, but for a typographic error, is the story of my life;' `If all the girls at a Yale prom were laid end—to—end, I wouldn't be at all surprised;' `She speaks eighteen languages and can't say no in any of them'—and so forth. Her strategy resembled that of Marlene Dietrich: `See what the Boys in the Back Room will have, and tell them I'm having the same'—a feminine imitation of the male at his own game.

By contrast, Mary McCarthy (1912—89) stressed female superiority. She was a graduate of Vassar, founded by Matthew Vassar, a self—taught Poughkeepsie brewer, who gave as his reason, `Woman, having received from her Creator the same intellectual constitution as Man, has the same right as Man to intellectual culture and development.' He thought that `the establishment and endowment of a College for the Education of Young Women would be, under God, a rich blessing to this City and State, to our Country and to the World.' McCarthy described Vassar as `four years of a renaissance lavishness, in an Academy that was a Forest of Arden and a Fifth Avenue department store combined.' She despised Yale and asserted, `Yale boys didn't learn anything in the subjects I knew anything about. We looked down on male education.' In a life spent among intellectuals, she never saw reason to revise that opinion.

Most women in mid—20th—century America, however, did not engage in warfare to defeat males by stealth. They subscribed to what was known as the `Women's Pact,' which recognized that women fell into three groups. The first, unable or unwilling to marry, or afraid of childbirth, devoted their lives to a career (as they had once entered nunneries). The second married and bore children, then left their rearing to others and pursued careers. The third chose marriage as a career and raising children and homemaking as their art. The Women's Pact was broken by the feminists of the 1960s and later, who denounced the marriage—careerists as traitors to their sex. Helen Gurley Brown, founder of *Cosmopolitan* (1965), a Dorothy—Parker—strategy magazine, complete (eventually) with expletives and full—frontal male nudity, denounced the housewife as `a parasite, a dependent, a scrounger, a sponger [and] a bum.' Betty Friedan (b. 1921) in *The Feminine Mystique* (1974) called femininity `a comfortable concentration camp,' though she also argued, in *The Second Stage* (1981), that Women's Liberation and `the sex war against men' were `irrelevant' and 'self—defeating.' In 1970 *Time* magazine published a notorious essay in which Gloria Steinem castigated `traditional women' as `inferiors' and `dependent creatures who

are still children.' This refrain was taken up by innumerable women academics who proliferated in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, and ran `Women's Studies' departments at many universities.

But, in the meantime, ordinary women were advancing, economically, financially, professionally, and in self—confidence, without much help from the feminist movement, which had particularly opposed women's participation in entrepreneurial capitalism. By 1996, American women owned 7.7 million businesses, employing 15.5 million people and generating $1.4 trillion in sales. In a large majority of cases this was combined with marriage and child—rearing. Indeed women owned 3.5 million businesses based on their homes, employing 5.6 million full—time and 8.4 million part—time. It was established that women—owned businesses were expanding more rapidly than the economy as a whole, and were more likely to continue to flourish than the average US firm. Women also increasingly flourished in American business of all types, including the biggest. Nor, by the second half of the 1990s, were they effectively barred from the higher ranks by the `Glass Ceiling,' a term invented by the *Wall Street journal* in 1986 to describe the `invisible but impenetrable barrier between women and the executive suite.' This notion was confirmed by the report of a Glass Ceiling Commission created by the Civil Rights Act of 1991, which concluded that only 5 percent of senior managers of *Fortune 2000* industrial and service companies were women, deliberate discrimination being the implied cause. Careful analysis, however, dismissed the 5 percent figures as `statistically corrupt but rhetorically and politically useful,' and in fact `highly misleading.' The truth was that few women graduated from management schools in the 1950s and 1960s, and therefore were eligible for top posts in the 199os; but many more were `in the pipeline.' During the decade 1985—95, the number of female executive vice—presidents more than doubled and the number of female senior vice—presidents increased by 75 percent. The evidence of actual companies, treated separately, showed that the Glass Ceiling was a myth.

It was also a myth, though a more difficult one to disprove, that women continued to be insignificant in politics. The only woman to be a candidate in a presidential election, Geraldine Ferraro, who ran as vice—president in 1984, got an exceptionally rough handling, largely on account of her husband's business interests; and women continued to be poorly represented in Congress. But, here again, patience was needed. In 1974, for example, 47 women were main—party candidates for Congress, 36 for statewide office, and 1,122 for state legislatures. In 1994 more than twice as many women were running for office: 121 for Congress, 79 for statewide office, and 2,284 for state legislatures. A 1996 study showed negligible differences between men and women in success rates for state or national office. By 1996, 21 percent of state legislators were women, compared with 4 percent in 1968, and with eight senators and forty—seven (of 435) in the House, women were increasing their ratio at the center with gratifying speed, if still a long way from statistical equality. As if to make the point, the reelected President Clinton announced in December 1996 the appointment of America's first woman Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright.

The same month, a special study by the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research announced, effectively, victory for the women's cause in America. The figures now showed that, among younger women, the wage gap had been closed and women were now earning 98 percent of men's wages; that in 1920—80 women's wages grew 20 percent faster than men's and were still growing faster; that earning differentials at all levels were insignificant or non—existent; that the gap was rapidly closing for older women; that more women were now in higher education than men, and that in all the indicators of educational attainment and professional choice and skills—associate degrees, bachelors and masters degrees, doctoral

degrees, first professional degrees, qualifications for law, medicine, accountancy, and dentistry, women were approaching the 50 percent mark or had moved ahead. By 1995 women constituted 59 percent of the labor force in work, were on the whole better educated and trained then men, were acquiring professional qualifications more quickly, and were less likely to be unemployed. The authors of the study, Diana Furchtgott—Roth and Christine Stolba, concluded that in education, in the labor force, and in the eyes of the law women had effectively achieved equality. The law was working and being enforced and in this respect the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 had succeeded.

It is appropriate to end this history of the American people on a note of success, because the story of America is essentially one of difficulties being overcome by intelligence and skill, by faith and strength of purpose, by courage and persistence. America today, with its 260 million people, its splendid cities, its vast wealth, and its unrivaled power, is a human achievement without parallel. That achievement—the transformation of a mostly uninhabited wilderness into the supreme national artifact of history—did not come about without heroic sacrifice and great sufferings stoically endured, many costly failures, huge disappointments, defeats, and tragedies. There have indeed been many setbacks in 400 years of American history. As we have seen, many unresolved problems, some of daunting size, remain. But the Americans are, above all, a problem—solving people. They do not believe that anything in this world is beyond human capacity to soar to and dominate. They will not give up. Full of essential goodwill to each other and to all, confident in their inherent decency and their democratic skills, they will attack again and again the ills in their society, until they are overcome or at least substantially redressed. So the ship of state sails on, and mankind still continues to watch its progress, with wonder and amazement and sometimes apprehension, as it moves into the unknown waters of the 21st century and the third millennium. The great American republican experiment is still the cynosure of the world’s eyes. It is still the first, best hope for the human race. Looking back on its past, and forward to its future, the auguries are that it will not disappoint an expectant humanity.