remain answers on paper only. Recent history has not backed them up. We have had few practical lessons in how to do it in the period since Fukuyama proclaimed the end of history, which means that history is a long way from having come to an end. However, we have had one clear lesson in how not to do it. Among the negative achievements of democracy that I listed above is what has become known as 'democratic peace theory'. This is the idea that where you have widespread democracy you don't have war, because democracies won't fight each other. It is a view that can be traced back to the late eighteenth-century German philosopher Immanuel Kant, who argued that the path to 'perpetual peace' lay through the global expansion of republican politics: i.e., a politics of constitutional restraint. When citizens can restrain the bellicose instincts of their governments – above all, when the people who have to pay for wars through their taxes are in a position to prevent them – good sense will prevail. Kant was no blind optimist: he thought the path to peace would be a long and winding road. But it had to pass through what we now call democracy.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century some Western politicians, led by George W. Bush, wanted to find a short cut. If democracy equals the absence of war, then why not export democracy by force of arms in order to multiply its benefits? Wars to spread democracy could be viewed as an investment in the future peace of the world: abracadabra, a negative turned into a positive. In the aftermath of the attacks of 9/11, democratic peace theory got annexed to the war on terror, first in Afghanistan, then in Iraq. These wars had a dual purpose: to combat terrorism and to plant democracy in parts of the world where it was missing. Their aims were supposed to be mutually supportive. They turned out to be mutually destructive. The war on terror did not help to implant democracy, which is proving vulnerable in all those places to which it has been spread by force of arms since 2001. The attempt to implant democracy has not helped in the fight against terror, which has proliferated in many of the places where democracy has spread (above all, in Afghanistan and Iraq). To his credit, Fukuyama was one of those who warned what could go wrong. In 2003, before the invasion of Iraq, he broke with the boosters of democratic peace theory to argue that wars for peace are playing with fire. Politics is far too complex for such straightforward solutions. Fukuyama insisted that the institutional arrangements that constrain violence – from the rule of law to economic prosperity to democratic elections – are many and overlapping; they take time to work their magic together. Forcing it usually means wrecking it.

Democratic peace theory is a good example of the perilous gap that often separates knowing *that* in politics from knowing *how*. We know that democracies don't go to war together. But we don't know how to make it happen. We can't even be sure why it happens. Though Kant is often treated as a forerunner of contemporary liberal democracy, he is just as plausibly seen as a successor to Hobbes. In the field of international relations 'Hobbesian' is invariably translated as 'anarchic', since Hobbes said that states could do whatever they liked to defend themselves. It is assumed that means