PURSUING THE GLOBAL COMMON GOOD

Principle and Practice in U.S. Foreign Policy

Edited by
Sally Steenland, Peter Rundlet,
Michael H. Fuchs & David Buckley

Center for American Progress

The Faith and Progressive Policy Initiative

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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PREFACE

In the fall of 2006, the Center for American Progress held a conference at Georgetown University entitled, "Securing the Common Good." President Bill Clinton gave the keynote address, and an eminent panel of policymakers, advocates, academics, and faith leaders explored the concept of the common good as a moral precept and a progressive theory of governing. Their discussions spurred the Center to continue our work on this issue and examine the international aspects and implications of the common good for U.S. foreign policy.

The result is now in your hands. *Pursuing the Global Common Good* is a collection of essays that describes the challenges of going beyond perceived notions of national self-interest and security in order to pursue policies that will benefit our common humanity. The essays make the case that despite differences of religion, ethnicity, culture, and geography, people around the world share basic values and interests. A U.S. foreign policy that reflects these universal values is the surest way to secure our most fundamental national interests.

By exploring strategies for achieving this goal, *Pursuing the Global Common Good* is an essential guide for those seeking to connect our nation's highest ethical traditions with pressing foreign policy realities. Whether arguing against torture or for our responsibility to protect vulnerable citizens against atrocities, these essays dispel the faulty notion that our national self-interest conflicts with our ethical obligations. To the contrary, they make a strong and persuasive case that we can do better by doing good because our nation's self-interest and its moral responsibilities are intertwined.

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Introduction

Rev. Dr. Bernice Powell Jackson

In his book, *No Future Without Forgiveness*, Archbishop Desmond Tutu writes:

> Ubuntu is very difficult to render into Western language. It speaks of the very essence of being human... "My humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in yours."... "A person is a person through other persons"..."I am human because I belong. I participate. I share."... knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than who they are.[1]

The concept of *ubuntu* is part of the culture of southern Africa, but it also exists by other names or by practice in the Americas, the Caribbean, Asia, and the Pacific. In the lived existence of human beings, this sense of community, or ubuntu, almost always has been central to our humanity. Such an understanding of community responsibility for guaranteeing basic human needs can be seen in the ancient texts of the people of Israel, where food, water, clothing, healing, compassion, and hospitality were required as members of the community. In slavery the Israelites shared, in the wilderness they shared; when they settled in the Promised Land they shared.

In the earliest days of the United States, this need to respect, help, and protect each other was lived out by Native Americans, as well as by many of the settlers on the frontier. Inter-connectedness was essential for survival. In today's industrialized society, however, the bonds of community have frayed. Rugged individualism rules, and people are at risk to rise or fall on their own. In such a hyper-competitive, alienated world, it is difficult for us to see the myriad ways in which we are bound together—to imagine that there could be a common good

Some of us believe that the spiritual searching of modern times stems as much from this loss of community as it does from the desire to find God. For it is often true that the path to finding God is through finding community—just as the path to finding community is through finding God. This sense of community and obligation to others has significance not only within our national borders, but beyond, for it encompasses the global human family. By acknowledging our inherent connectedness to those around the world, we take a crucial step in pursuing the global common good.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. understood this well. He envisioned the Beloved Community, building it upon the foundational work of African-American theologian Dr. Howard Thurman, South African pacifist missionary Olive Schreiner, and others. Dr. King understood that the key to building this global community and to finding God was through love, the *agape* love about which he often preached.

> This call for a world-wide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing and unconditional love for all men. This often misunderstood and misinterpreted concept has now become an absolute necessity for the survival of man. When I speak of love, I am speaking of that force which all the great religions have seen as the supreme unifying principle of life.[2]

The awareness of being bound together—of loving our neighbors as ourselves, regardless of national origin—can also be called the global common good. In re-capturing such a bond of belonging, we are able to live up to the principles upon which the United States was founded and which our diverse faith traditions command us to live. That is why this book, *Pursuing the Global Common Good*, is an important collection for all of us as both citizens and believers.

American foreign policy is one area where the principles of the global common good can be translated into concrete action. How do we challenge our government to live out the commandment to love our neighbors around the world as ourselves? How do we live out the Hebrew prophets' call to love mercy and let justice roll down like waters? How do we follow Jesus' self-proclaimed mission to bring good news to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor? How do we become blessed because we are peace-makers? How do we do unto the least of these?

In short, how do we move beyond individualistic theologies of prosperity and narrow national interest to a global politics of community and compassion?

There are those who consider politics and foreign policy to be dirty words, never to be mixed with religion. Some further worry that religion—especially on the global stage—can fuel only conflict, rather than bring about reconciliation. As a result, many people are remarkably timid about going public with their faith. But political processes are simply the way in which communities of people embody their moral values, organize their common life, allocate their resources, and tackle shared problems so that all might live together with some measure of justice, order, and peace.

Thus, these essays focus on moral values and American foreign policy, on how we as a powerful and privileged nation live out our deepest principles, our commitment to each other, and to all of God's creation. In so doing, the essays tackle the challenge of working for the global common good, even as we face a dangerous world. The essays address issues of torture, genocide, and the just use of force in an age of terrorism. They call for stewardship of God's creation and for closing the appalling economic gap in which nearly half the world's population—close to 2.8 billion people—live on less than $2 a day per day and lack safe, affordable drinking water.

In the aftermath of World War II and in response to the holocaust of six million Jews, the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the deaths of millions of soldiers and civilians, and the beginnings of the Cold War, faith leaders from around the world joined diplomats in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. At their gathering, these leaders wrestled with difficult questions of when the use of force was justified and how to end war as a means of settling human conflict. They showed us that theology and politics can come together for the global common good.

In the years following, their hopes have been met with both success and failure. Apartheid did fall. Wars and civil conflicts have come to an end, but others have erupted. Extreme poverty persists, despite great wealth. Torture continues to plague the world. The Kyoto Protocol was signed by many nations, but not by the United States. And the Just War Ethic, which has served as a powerful moral critique of war since ancient times, must confront the challenges of nuclear proliferation and terrorism while maintaining its moral force. These are the deep theological and political conversations we must have in the global village in which we live.

These conversations will challenge us all, faith leaders and policymakers, Americans and our partners in the international community. We will need to discern the common good among competing claims of individual interest. We will need to build trust among nations and civilizations with histories of violence and exploitation. And perhaps most importantly, we will need to demonstrate that our principled dedication to the global common good can be put into practice to address the great international challenges of our day.

The essays in this collection take up some of these pressing issues:

- Michael H. Fuchs and David Buckley begin the volume with a discussion of the global common good and its place in today's foreign policy environment.
- Professor Bryan Hehir explores how the venerable Just War Ethic relates to contemporary challenges of terrorism and nuclear proliferation.
- Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf and Rev. William F. Schulz testify to the damage that torture inflicts on both its targets and our national soul.
- Barbara Lerman-Golomb and Melody C. Barnes reveal the particular threat that global climate change poses to the world's poor.
- Denis McDonough and Andrew Tillman challenge policymakers to prioritize moral obligation along with national self-interest in crafting foreign aid programs.
- Dr. Elizabeth G. Ferris sets out a principled case for acting on the Responsibility to Protect in cases of mass atrocities and genocide.
- Finally, Tom Daschle and John D. Podesta, with their decades of policymaking experience, examine the importance of broadening our foreign policy debates and decisions to include the global common good.

People of faith have a particular point of view and a particular responsibility to ask the difficult questions of governments of the world. During the civil rights movement in the United States, we used to say that if you weren't part of the solution, you were part of the problem. Dr. King said it much more eloquently when he said that an injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. That is what the global common good is about—working together for a world of justice and peace.

Endnotes

1. Desmond Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness* (New York: Doubleday, 1999), p. 31.

2. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967).

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Pursuing the Global Common Good

Michael H. Fuchs and David Buckley

> *Is there not, whatever the nature of one's particular God, an element of sacrilege involved in the placing of all this at stake just for the sake of the comforts, the fears, and the national rivalries of a single generation? Is there not a moral obligation to recognize in this very uniqueness of the habitat and nature of man the greatest of our moral responsibilities, and to make of ourselves, in our national personification, its guardians and protectors rather than its destroyers?[1]* –George Kennan

The threats facing the global community have changed dramatically since George Kennan wrote these words in the closing years of the Cold War, and yet his basic observation that nations have moral obligations to work together as protectors and guardians of humanity is more important than ever. Both ethical responsibility and the reality of today's global challenges require U.S. foreign policymakers to work together across divides of geography and belief in pursuit of the global common good.

The challenges, however, are formidable. The precarious global balance of power maintained by "mutual assured destruction" in Kennan's day has passed. From genocide to environmental degradation to nuclear terrorism, the threats to U.S. national security and international peace remain grave.

It is often the fear of external threats that cause nations to abandon their freedoms and morals. Far too often the conduct of a moral U.S. foreign policy has been subsumed to unscrupulous policies in the pursuit of the national interest. This narrow conception of the national interest often excludes moral considerations, and we are led to believe that morals must be left at our borders in order to defend national security. And though protecting the freedoms of Americans is an integral part of the national interest, U.S. foreign policy in recent years has succumbed to demagoguery that exploits foreign threats in order to dispense with the very freedoms at home that an interest-based foreign policy is supposed to secure.

Determining the role of states in tackling global challenges and garnering the will to act will test the very definition of the national interest. Since the time of the ancients, philosophers, prophets, and political leaders have struggled to relate individual moral obligations to the duties of the state. If the state is the sum of its people, do individual people's values transfer to the activity of the state on the international scene? Foreign policy experts often express motives of state policy in terms of vaguely defined national interests, avoiding at all cost the language of moral obligation. The self-interest and the values of individuals and states, however, are not divorced.

It was the magnitude of global challenges that compelled even the realist foreign policy thinker Kennan to argue that the need to combat such threats was more than a question of the national interest. These are questions of morality. There is indeed "an element of sacrilege" in placing

our very earth in peril "for the sake of the comforts, the fears, and the national rivalries of a single generation."

The global common good bridges ethical obligation and policy practice. It challenges leaders, whether of religious organizations or secular governments, to translate their deepest principles into pragmatic action. It also challenges governments to engage with partners around the globe in the firm belief that our shared humanity provides grounding for common solutions to the greatest threats facing the world today.

Each of the essays in this collection demonstrates the unique potential of the global common good to reconcile our empirical realities and our ethical responsibilities. As the writers of these essays make clear, morality is not the only concern of U.S. foreign policy, but it is without question a paramount one, inextricably intertwined with policy. How humanity reached this new moral plateau, and what it will take to secure our footing here, is the appropriate place to begin our explication of the global common good.

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A Common Humanity

The evolution of human rights protections in the 20th century illustrates some of the challenges, as well as the great potential of the global common good. Today, even as some people question the commitment of states to live up to their obligations to protect human rights, it is clear that the growing worldwide embrace of fundamental human rights is a cause for hope.

In 1947, just two years after the conclusion of the most devastating war the world had ever experienced, representatives from a variety of the world's religions and peoples gathered in Paris to discuss humanity's common ties. The indiscriminate killing of World War II, when mass murder cut across lines of East and West, religion and ethnicity, compelled the world to come together to draft a Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Declaration's drafting committee employed the services of a separate group, UNESCO's Committee on the Theoretical Bases of Human Rights, to gather human rights perspectives from the world's diverse religious, philosophical, and legal traditions. The committee was chaired by the eminent historian E.H. Carr and included luminaries such as philosophers Richard McKeon and Jacques Maritain. Respondents to the committee's survey included Mohandas Ghandi, author

Aldous Huxley, Confucian philosopher Chung-Shu Lo, Bengali Muslim poet and philosopher Humayin Kabir, and Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce.

These representatives did not necessarily agree on political or religious ideology. They struggled to agree even on terminology. But there was something fundamental they shared that crossed the barriers of religion, ethnicity, geographical origins, and language. Ghandi, a British-educated Indian who fought for civil rights in South Africa and India, was uniquely placed to speak of the common beliefs of East and West. He noted during this process that "the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world."[2]

Looking back on the accomplishments of this group in building unity out of diversity, Harvard law professor Mary Ann Glendon observes:

> No one has yet improved on the answer of the UNESCO philosophers: Where basic human values are concerned, cultural diversity has been exaggerated. The group found, after consulting with Confucian, Hindu, Muslim, and European thinkers, that a core of fundamental principles was widely shared in countries that had not yet adopted rights instruments and in cultures that had not embraced the language of rights. Their survey persuaded them that basic human rights rest on "common convictions," even though those convictions "are stated in terms of different philosophic principles and on the background of divergent political and economic systems." The philosophers concluded that even people who seem to be far apart in theory can agree that certain things are so terrible in practice that no one will publicly approve them and that certain things are so good in practice that no one will publicly oppose them.[3]

The U.N. General Assembly unanimously adopted the Declaration on December 10, 1948. According to Glendon, on that night "the moral terrain of international relations was forever altered."[4]

Alas, in the decades that followed, states acquired checkered records of abiding by the Declaration they had signed. Millions of people experienced the freedom of democratic governance for the first time, and millions more were lifted out of poverty. But the Cold War and the hot ones that flared up in between consistently caused human rights to be subordinated to the "national interest."

Nor did the end of the Cold War stem the bloodshed. The pledge of "never again" was forgotten in Rwanda in 1994, as 800,000 Tutsis were slaughtered in a matter of months with machetes and other gruesome tools of genocide. The wars of dissolution in the former Yugoslavia and the accompanying ethnic cleansing drew a slow international reaction until Kosovo became the center of attention in 1999.

During that conflict, British Prime Minister Tony Blair gave a speech to the Economic Club in Chicago. He challenged the notion of non-intervention in the internal matters of states, speaking specifically about genocide, but also more broadly about threats to international

security emanating from repression within states. He spoke of Kosovo as a "just war, based not on any territorial ambitions, but on values." Another change was stirring in the international moral terrain.

In 2001, the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, sponsored by the Canadian government, further challenged the traditional notion of sovereignty. It endorsed the idea of the "responsibility to protect" humans under direct threat of violence and recognized the commitment of nations to prevent conflict.[5] In 2004, the U.N. Secretary General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change reported its findings and explicitly supported the responsibility to protect. Then-U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan recommended that heads of state adopt the responsibility to protect at the U.N. Summit in September 2005.[6] On September 15, 2005, the nations of the world committed themselves to "help protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity."[7] The world had recognized their elimination as an imperative so crucial to moral and security concerns as to merit the responsibility of the international community to intervene.

And yet, after enshrining this norm, the international community responded with horrendous apathy to the genocide in Darfur. The still-inadequate response to state-sponsored crimes against humanity is unfortunately a telling reminder that states rarely undertake humanitarian interventions unless they perceive there to be a direct national interest at stake. Without leadership from global powers and the international institutions they form, humanitarian agreements will never move from paper compacts to concrete reality.

That is why a global leader such as the United States has the unique capability, and obligation, to urge the international community to see that its moral interests and its security interests may very well be one and the same. Tony Blair concluded his speech in Chicago by touching on this theme: "As with the parable of the individuals and the talents, so those nations which have the power, have the responsibility."[8]

U.S. foreign policy can have no higher principle than acting on the recognition that the fates of people around the world and those of the American people are linked. As Martin Luther King Jr. wrote while jailed in Birmingham, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Given the global scale of today's greatest moral challenges, King's words are more apt today than ever.

Genealogy of the Common Good

The common good is an old idea with new-found vitality in American public discourse. Its direct lineage includes philosophers, theologians, and statesmen from various ethical traditions. Debates about the common good allow participation by diverse schools of thought and provide a unique opportunity to build the broad political will necessary to meet today's international moral obligations. Even where the term itself has not appeared, the underlying values of universal human dignity and a collective approach to our greatest human challenges resonate throughout ethical traditions. The global common good challenges individual traditions to work across boundaries of faith and geography to arrive at a shared moral vision for our highly interconnected world.

Aristotle was the philosophical father of the common good. In his quest to set out the ethical precepts for developing virtuous citizens and building just societies, he developed the idea that both individuals and governments ought to work for the same virtuous goals. By bringing humanity back to its shared common good, he developed an ethical system that attempts to address the shared interests of diverse societies.

Aristotle could not conceive of just government as divorced from this pursuit of the common good. He writes in Book I of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, "For though this good is the same for the individual and the state, yet the good of the state seems a grander and more perfect thing both to attain and to secure; and glad as one would be to do this service for a single individual, to do it for a people and for a number of states is nobler and more divine."[9] Such governments could not merely protect the interests of powerful individuals, but instead must work for nobler ends: "The good is justice, in other words, the common interest."[10]

St. Thomas Aquinas played a critical role in wedding Aristotle's concept to the Christian tradition. In addition to building on the biblical idea that one should "not seek that which is profitable to myself, but to many, that they may be saved," Aquinas makes the important point that the common good and the good of individuals are not in opposition. In fact, "He that seeks the good of the many seeks in consequence his own good."[11]

Contemporary Christian sources, both Catholic and Protestant, have built on this long tradition of advocating government for the common good. *Gaudium et Spes*, one of the central documents of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, or Vatican II, speaks of "the increasingly universal complexion" of the common good, given our growing human interdependence, and argues that we have duties not just to our countrymen but "with respect to the whole human race."

In Protestant traditions the concept of the common good rests on similar foundations of universal human dignity and a shared responsibility to build just political systems. Old Testament injunctions to "Let justice roll down like waters" and New Testament reminders that "Whatsoever you do unto the least of these you do unto me" exemplify religious commands to work for the common good. As contemporary Evangelical ethicist Ronald J. Sider argues, there is an undeniable positive role for government to play in this work—to be what Paul calls "God's servant for your good."[12]

The common good resonates beyond Christian traditions as well. The term has rich resonance in the history of Jewish thought and in contemporary Jewish practice. The Jewish tradition of working for justice and the common good within the covenantal community is extensive: Among the 613 commandments laid out in the covenant with Moses are injunctions to protect the disempowered, especially the poor, widows, orphans, and children. By acts of *tzedakah* (doing justice) the people act in accordance with God's will and fulfil their obligations to the covenant. The related concept of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) is also prominent within the contemporary Jewish community.

These obligations to work for the common good apply not only within the Jewish community, but also in relationships with the broader world. Mainstream rabbinic theology today sees

humanity universally being made *tselem elohim* (in the image of God) and thus worthy of respect and ethical care. The Jewish tradition may provide the most direct path to God, but as the great Jewish philosopher Moses Maimonides argued, Jews should "Accept the truth, whatever its source." Maimonides and Jewish thinkers since have actively sought out the common good in pluralistic settings.

Like its two Abrahamic cousins, Islam is rich in ethical injunctions grounded in the idea of the common good. The presence of *zakat* (almsgiving) as one of the five pillars of Islam, and sometimes referred to as one of two cardinal obligations, makes it clear that an ethic of mutual support is at the core of the Islamic faith. There is a strong sense that good government is one that can provide for the poor and needy. The idea of *maslaha*, translated as either "public interest" or "common good," guides governmental responsibility to provide for public needs. It has featured heavily in the writings of modern Muslim reformers throughout the Islamic world.

Just as essential to the common good as this charitable ethic is Islam's capacity to show respect for pluralism and its insistence on universal human dignity. Humans share a *fitra* (noble nature) even outside of the Islamic community, and thus have access to God's truth. Prophets are sent outside the Islamic community "so that humankind might have no argument against God" for excluding one tribe. Our human diversity is the express will of God, and as such, working together for the common good seems a natural outcome: "For every one of you, We have appointed a path and a way. If God had willed, He would have made you but one community; but that [He has not done in order that] He may try you in what has come to you. So compete with one another in good works."[13]

Conceptions of the common good abound in Eastern traditions as well. Mencius, one of the most influential Confucian thinkers, lived during the same era that Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle were creating the bases of Western thought. Thousands of miles to the east, Mencius was building on Confucius' foundations and laying out the bases of much of Eastern thought:

> I say that all men have a mind which cannot bear to see the sufferings of others knowing that any of our contemporaries, seeing a child about to fall into a well, will without exception experience a feeling of alarm and distress. They will feel so, not so as to gain the favor of the child's parents, nor so as to seek the praise of their neighbors and friends, nor from dislike of the reputation of having been unmoved by such a thing…[14]

Irene Bloom, a scholar of Eastern thought, has remarked that, "Mencius does not need to tell us what the person who sees the child teetering on the edge of a well will do. We ourselves fill this in out of our own humanity. We recognize that all human beings can be counted on, insofar as they retain their humanity, to act on the spontaneous impulse to save the child by pulling it from danger."[15]

Mahayana, one of the two major strains of Buddhism, emphasizes the need of those who have attained enlightenment to help others reach that goal. And contemporary Buddhism has produced one of the most eloquent proponents of the global common good in the Dalai Lama.

His tireless advocacy for social justice applies the millennia of Buddhist tradition to today's pressing ethical problems.

> Ultimately, humanity is one and this small planet is our only home. If we are to protect this home of ours, each of us needs to experience a vivid sense of universal altruism… I believe that at every level of society—familial, tribal, national, and international—the key to a happier and more successful world is the growth of compassion. We do not need to become religious, nor do we need to believe in an ideology. All that is necessary is for each of us to develop our good human qualities.[16]

These rich traditions of religious and philosophical thought have pervaded societies throughout the world, establishing the foundations for civilizations and governments.

In addition to its religious roots, the concept of the global common good is based in American civic values that unite our nation and, at our best, guide our actions in the world. The Enlightenment ideal of universal human dignity drove Thomas Jefferson to write of self-evident truths, which today unites American policymakers with their counterparts working for human rights around the world.

"Many of the issues at the core of the global common good have increasingly brought together diverse sectors within this country. Evangelicals and progressive activists, Republican and Democratic policymakers, corporations, and state regulators are coming to realize that failing to muster such political will would threaten our security, economic growth, and especially our nation's deepest moral values."

Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant expressed similar truths when developing his cosmopolitan ideal of the international community. "Since the narrower or wider community of the peoples of the earth has developed so far that a violation of rights in one place is felt throughout the world, the idea of a cosmopolitan right is not a fantastical, high-flown or exaggerated notion."[17]

In more recent times, the American dedication to social responsibility has animated progressive initiatives from the New Deal to the Millennium Challenge Corporation. Contemporary progressive thinkers such as Michael Tomasky, John Halpin, and Ruy Teixiera have advanced the common good as a moral precept and governing philosophy that can revitalize progressive thought.[18]

A Need for Consensus and Leadership

Discovering common ties among varying belief systems is hardly the most arduous part of bridging religious, ethnic, and geographical divides. The greater challenge is to apply the ideas of the global common good to practical problems and forge common solutions. Translating the contentions of philosophers and religious scholars into agreement between policymakers and nations is the task of statesmen and citizens.

Contemporary thinkers in the foreign policy world have vigorously taken up the issue of values in America's foreign policy. Given the disastrous neoconservative approach to the mix of values with policy so far this century, how can we protect ethics from politicization and preserve the idea of a values-driven international order? How can we avoid falling back into the purely self-interested calculations that lose sight of our nation's ideals and responsibilities?

Policymakers can realize that principle and pragmatism need not be in total conflict. Leslie Gelb argued in 2003 that "ideals and self-interests are both generally considered necessary ingredients of the national interest,"[19] and that values and realistic policymaking can find common ground. As Madeleine Albright put it, "A successful foreign policy must begin with the world as it is but also work for what we would like it to be."[20]

> "Given the disastrous approach to the neoconservative mix of values with policy so far this century, how can we protect ethics from politicization and preserve the idea of a values-driven international order? How can we avoid falling back into the purely self-interested calculations that lose sight of our nation's ideals and responsibilities?"

Only by engaging international partners in building this vision can America can live up to its highest values. Challenges like war, pandemic disease, and climate change threaten the very things we cherish most—they do not discriminate based on ethnicity or religion and are not confined by national boundaries. When war sends refugees and violence across borders, when disease spreads, and when clouds of pollution infect the earth's atmosphere, seemingly local problems become universal threats.

Nor are these problems equally distributed. Climate change, war, and disease affect certain peoples more intensely, based on geographical location and levels of prosperity and development. For instance, Bangladesh alone cannot stem the tide of global carbon emissions, and yet it will be one of the first countries to drown when climate change raises sea levels. Concerted multilateral efforts are essential to curing these global ills.

The burden of responsibility is also uneven. At the beginning of the 21st century, the United States occupies a unique role as the world's lone superpower. The United States must translate

that power into leadership. Toward the end of his country's struggle for independence, Vaclav Havel said,

> Without a global revolution in the sphere of the human consciousness, nothing will change for the better in the sphere of our being…. We still do not know how to put morality ahead of politics, science, and economy. We are still incapable of understanding that the only genuine backbone of all our actions, if they are to be moral, is responsibility—responsibility to something higher than my family, my country, my company, my success.[21]

Politics, science, and economics must be used for moral ends in order for the United States to fulfil its responsibilities to mankind. And once we begin to build policies based on our common values, even if we cannot bring about a full "global revolution in the sphere of the human consciousness," we can surely try to bring about "change for the better in the sphere of our being."

Obstacles to Action

At this moment when the global common good is so needed, there are serious obstacles facing leaders, both religious and secular, to building a more just world. Each of these obstacles must be faced in order to translate the global common good from principle to action.

First, the perceived threat of a clash of civilizations predicted by Samuel Huntington in his seminal 1993 *Foreign Affairs* article has not disappeared. Indeed, the influence of Islamist terrorist organizations and the ill-conceived United States-led invasion of Iraq have stoked fears that the boundaries of civilizations may be more impermeable than ever. Those who advocate for the global common good must rededicate themselves to working with partners from diverse corners of the world to demonstrate that a clash of civilizations is not the world's inevitable future.

Second, weak and failing states make working for the global common good more difficult. Such states lack the leadership structures that enable multinational cooperation, as well as dedication to democracy and human rights. As the world learned from Afghanistan's recent history, such states also provide safe havens for terrorist networks. The fact that Iraq is rapidly disintegrating is a sobering challenge to policymakers and faith leaders alike. Managing threats and promoting internal reforms while dedicating the resources of the international community to building the capacity for good governance in such states is an important task in pursuing the global common good.

Third, international institutions continue to struggle from lack of dedication to the common cause from their members and internal management challenges. Even so, such institutions must play active roles in distributing aid, providing military intervention at times, and, perhaps most importantly, giving concrete proof that pursuing the global common good requires participation from more than just traditional great powers.

Fourth, economic globalization is an unavoidable force that requires careful moral consideration. Both in the United States and the developing world, market forces can provide millions with an

improved quality of life or can violate basic human rights and degrade communities. By moving beyond the tired dichotomy between the interests of labor and those of free trade, policymakers can harness international market forces in ways that increase prosperity, promote decent work, and live up to America's moral obligations as an economic leader.

Finally, there is an undeniable need to build political will for action in order to confront these great challenges. Summoning the will to act requires bridging divides, both within the United States and with international partners. When it comes to crafting U.S. foreign policy, building bipartisan consensus is a Herculean task. That said, many of the issues at the core of the global common good have increasingly brought together diverse sectors within this country. Evangelicals and progressive activists, Republican and Democratic policymakers, corporations, and state regulators are coming to realize that failing to muster such political will would threaten our security, economic growth, and especially our nation's deepest moral values.

How might today's leaders and crafters of American foreign policy arrive at similar successes when addressing obstacles to the global common good? The authors in this volume consider these challenges and the potential for the global common good to address them when applied to a number of distinct policy areas. For instance, private and public organizations and governments spanning the globe have funded the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. Religious groups have mobilized communities to advocate for intervention in Darfur. But more is needed. U.S. leadership is indispensable.

Conclusion

After the lights went out across Europe and Asia amid the horrors of World War II, the United States eventually dedicated its entire being—military, industrial, and human—to save those under the jackboot of fascism. During the Cold War, the United States recognized the foreign policy errors that contributed to the rise of fascism, sparking our country's dedication to the prevention of future conflict by helping rebuild nations and shelter those faced with the threat of Soviet expansion.

Today, U.S. leaders must recognize that the special role the United States plays in world affairs does not merely derive from its unmatched military might or economic heft but also from its moral stature. Much of our moral authority abroad rests on our moral authority at home, and there is work to be done here as well. But America must remain a beacon for the global common good, aiding those struggling for freedom and trying to rise out of poverty. And in order to fulfil the global common good, the United States will need to call upon all the facets of its power. We must arm our ambassadors of aid and ideas with the necessary languages, resources, and support to, as President Kennedy put it, help those "struggling to break the bonds of mass misery." Our leaders must urge the international community to tackle those global issues that cannot be combated without U.S. involvement, such as global warming, alleviating poverty, and fighting the spread of HIV/AIDS.

It is an undeniable challenge to balance the ethical traditions that resonate with the global common good with national security interests. Working for these goals, however, is a recurring

theme of American foreign policy, from Woodrow Wilson arguing that matters of global affairs are "shot through with the principles of life" to John Kennedy pledging aid to "those in huts and villages of half the world…not because the communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right." As examples from the Universal Declaration to the Responsibility to Protect demonstrate, we know that we can build consensus. We now must learn to practice what we preach.

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The Just War Ethic
Protecting the Global Common Good

Professor J. Bryan Hehir

The concept of the common good has an ancient lineage and a modern coinage. From its early roots up to the 20th century, the common good has referred primarily to the goal of each individual society to create a broad social fabric of spiritual, material, and temporal goods from which all would benefit. The expansion of the common good beyond national boundaries emerged in the second half of the 20th century. Pope John XXIII first invoked the idea of a global common good in 1961, as he recognized that the growing interdependence of the world in material terms required a moral vision that would connect the national common good to the international common good. Issues such as security, political economy, human rights, and global governance were related to national and international common interests. And all of these issues come to the forefront when exploring the role of the Just War Ethic in the pursuit of the global common good.

International and national security is a fundamental aspect of the common good. The use of force is a continuing possibility in world politics. The Just War Ethic, or JWE, distinguishes between morally legitimate and morally harmful methods of using force; its premises have been grounded in the concept of a single human community. Even when war is morally necessary, there are preexisting moral bonds which are maintained even during conflict. The JWE has traditionally been used to measure the use of force pursued for reasons of national security. But the nature of modern war and the interdependence of the global polity today requires that force must also be measured in terms of its impact on international security.

The JWE is an ancient moral theory which has experienced a revival in the midst of modern warfare.[1] Today the theory is appealed to (explicitly or implicitly) by international organizations, government commissions, and the U.S. military, as well as by the more traditional interested parties—theologians, moral philosophers, and international lawyers. The revival of interest in the ideas of this ancient theory is rooted in the fact that the JWE reflects and embodies two broader trends in world politics.

The first is the growing interest in and recognition of the need for explicit moral analysis of a state's foreign policy objectives and methods. To some degree this trend, visible since the 1970s, is a reaction to the dominance of one strand of the realist conception of foreign policy and warfare.[2]

In the immediate post-war era through most of the 1960s, the realists simply assumed it was unrealistic to be explicit about the moral dimension of foreign policy. The realist argument was cast in terms of complexity, consequences, and crusades.

The complexity critique essentially held that the attempt to be explicitly conscious about the moral dimension of policy would only add to the already complex pattern of reasoning needed to conduct foreign policy in the anarchic world of states. The argument from consequences asserted that past efforts to attend to moral concerns usually produced unintended (and detrimental) results. Among these results: resort to a crusade mentality in the name of spreading democracy, protecting human rights, or ending war forever.

The realist critique had its merits; examples existed for each of the claims made. The defect of the argument was the implicit assumption that the moral dimension of policy involved a choice: One could include it or exclude it. The problem, of course, is that some morality always guides policy choices. It may be described in non-moral terms, or it may be shrouded in arguments about power and interest, but morality is inherent in human behavior, so the real question is whether the moral dimension of policy is explicitly defined and argued in a disciplined way or whether it lies embedded in other factors without explanation. The moral factor can drive a policy without ever being acknowledged or justified.

Over the last 30 years, dominant issues in world politics made it clear that the human consequences of policy decisions required explicit moral justification. Three broad areas of policy exemplify this need: human rights, weapons of mass destruction, and globalization. Each area of policy is undoubtedly empirically complex, but each area also has a demonstrable impact on human life and human rights. The trend over the last three decades in both the study of world politics and the arena of diplomacy and strategy has included increasing attention to the ethical dimension of policy. For many, the JWE was the first place they turned for a developed moral vision about war and peace.

> "The problem, of course, is that some morality always guides policy choices. It may be described in non-moral terms or it may be shrouded in arguments about power and interest, but morality is inherent in human behavior, so the real question is whether the moral dimension of policy is explicitly defined and argued in a disciplined way or whether it lies embedded in other factors without explanation."

The second major trend reflected in the JWE is the attention now paid to the role of religion in world politics.[3] The two realities, ethics and religion, are often conflated, but they are analytically distinct, particularly in any discussion about world politics. Many of the most prolific scholars writing in ethics do so without any connection to religious ideas or convictions. But the dynamics of post-Cold War politics have brought religious themes explicitly into the analysis of international relations. Several of the intractable intrastate conflicts of the 1990s included a religious dimension; the appeal to Islam in post-9/11 struggles highlighted the need for an understanding of this major religious tradition; in the United States, religion is woven through both domestic politics and foreign policy debates.

The JWE today stands independently of any religious tradition, but its roots, concepts, and some of its premises have distinctively Christian connections. As such, the JWE can be argued in explicitly religious terms or it can be conceived and used in the style of moral philosophy.

The Just War Ethic: A Synthetic Statement

My purpose here is to move across the religious-philosophical background of the JWE in order to provide a brief statement of its origin and evolution as well as a summary statement of the categories it offers today for anyone seeking to assess modern warfare in moral terms. The JWE is rooted simultaneously in the Christian church, but also in the Roman Empire. Cicero had developed a conception of just war, but the most commonly acknowledged origins of the ethic lie in the writing of Augustine of Hippo, a fifth century bishop in North Africa. The principal catalyst for Augustine in addressing the ethics of war was to defend the role of Christians as loyal citizens of the Roman Empire. One test of loyalty was what position Christians held about war. The New Testament contained key references—by word and deed—advocating nonresistance in the face of evil. Augustine was not prepared to endorse the use of force easily. But his reading of human nature and human history was grounded in part in shared convictions with political realism.

Augustine's realist premise was crisply captured in his conviction that "war is the result of sin and war is the remedy for sin."[4] In non-theological terms, Augustine expressed his conviction that the possibility of conflict existed just below the surface of daily life and, therefore, some agency in human affairs should possess the legitimate right to oppose injustice up to and including the use of force.

This premise yielded Augustine's parsimonious statement of the content of a just war. War was legitimate when: There existed a just cause (an injustice which needed to be resisted); it was declared by proper authority (one who held responsibility for the common good of the political community); and war was fought with the right intention (to restore peace, not from a motive of revenge or hatred). The contemporary version of the JWE is more expansive and more complex than Augustine's statement of it.[5] But his pivotal significance in the tradition was to reverse the judgment that is often seen as self-evident—that all war must be morally wrong, however necessary it is in political terms. Augustine and the just war tradition have held a more complex position: War should be held to stringent standards of justification, but it can be morally legitimate, as well as politically necessary.

The road from Augustine to the modern version of the JWE passes through extensive stages of development. Changing forms of political authority (empire, medieval commonwealth, sovereign states, international organizations) and changing conceptions of strategy required that the tradition grow and be reshaped to keep alive the basic theme of the ethic—that war can be legitimate, but it must be limited in its purposes, methods, and intention.

The JWE to which scholars, statesmen, and strategists appeal today is usually structured in two broad categories: The (moral) causes for war (Jus ad Bellum) and the (moral) means of war (Jus in Bello). The ethic is not a tightly designed theory but a tradition of moral analysis that contains multiple theories of how it should be argued. In spite of the pluralism, it is possible to state and summarize its key concepts that then must be engaged with political-strategic realities.

The Jus ad Bellum

James Childress, a philosopher and religious ethicist, has argued that the JWE always raises the basic question: can war ever be justified?[6] Augustine answered the question in principle. The specification of which kinds of behaviors constitute a "Just Cause" for war yields both core categories and some debated causes. The core is best represented in modern parlance as "aggression." Aggression against the life and/or basic rights of others is a consensual just cause.[7]

A more debated just cause is the right to take up arms against one's own government; it has been justified in the tradition but also carefully circumscribed. A modern debate—more legal than moral—has been the right (or the duty) to intervene in a domestic conflict in another state. Just War, military action to prevent aggression across state borders, has had, until recently, more support than Just Intervention, military action addressing internal conflict or repression in another state.[8]

Beyond "Just Cause," the other ad bellum categories include: proper authority, right intention, last resort, possibility of success, and proportionality. A more detailed history of the JWE could unfold the history and definition of each of these moral categories. Here, only selective illustrations are possible.

The concept of "Proper Authority" is as old as Augustine's notion of "care for the common good," but the possessors of that authority have varied: medieval princes, political leaders in democracies, and sovereign rulers generally. In the modern context—sovereign states couched in the setting of the U.N. Charter—there is a strong consensus about the right of states to act in the name of international order, self-defense or defense of other states under attack (Article 51), but less clarity about proper authority to undertake intervention. Finally, there is even less clarity, and much less support, for the moral authority of individual states to engage in preemptive war.

The concept of "Last Resort" is inherently open to debate, but it serves a useful if imprecise function. The idea that part of a state's moral bona fides is the willingness to use political-diplomatic measures to resist injustice before resorting to war keeps alive the awareness of how unpredictable and dangerous military force is as an instrument of justice. Beyond diplomatic measures, the idea of Last Resort is most often debated today in terms of resort to economic sanctions as a way to change state behavior. It is important to note that the Last Resort principle is not meant to make it impossible to resort to force.

Finally, the idea of "Proportionality" is both central to the JWE and also seldom capable of precise line drawing. The meaning of the term is clear: If the justification of war lies in its necessity to prevent harm, then the war itself should not produce more destruction and harm than its original purpose. Proportionality is, in part, a consequentialist judgment; it assesses right action in light of the consequences produced. The JWE is not simply a consequentialist ethic, as will be clear when we assess the means of war.

But within the overarching ethic there are consequentialist judgments made. The proportionality test should be used before war begins, while it is pursued, and retrospectively to draw lessons from experience. The nuclear age often raised proportional judgments; the expected consequences of

this kind of war served as a restraint even in situations of severe crisis, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Vietnam War led many to decide after years of war that standards of proportionality had been surpassed. Retrospective assessment of the consequences of Iraq may well lead to firm judgments against preventive war.

The Jus in Bello

Much of the writing and use of the JWE in the 20th century focused on the Jus in Bello.[9] In part this examination of the means of war was surely due to the nature of military technology and its impact on the way wars were fought. The inauguration of air warfare, the advent of the nuclear age and the increasing sophistication and destructive capability to take the war to the adversary's homeland and domestic society raised profound moral questions. In addition, the two moral criteria which constitute the Jus in Bello were more familiar to politicians and strategists and to the general public than some of the ideas in the Jus ad Bellum.

The two criteria are the principle of noncombatant immunity and the principle of proportionality. The first prohibits absolutely the purposeful, intended attacks on the civilian population. It equates such attacks with murder as unjustified killing. The second principle once again argues that in tactics and strategy the good one seeks must not cause more harm than the benefits it produces. Some commentary is needed to use the principles accurately.

The first principle does not assert that if civilians are killed in war, the tactics or strategy are morally wrong. The killing has to be planned or intended; the technical phrase is "directly intended." In judging the tactics of war, the noncombatant immunity principle is used first; if the strategy fails this test, it should not be employed. If it passes this test, then a second judgment of proportionality must be made. Attacks on marginally significant targets where large-scale damage is the likely outcome can be ruled out even if civilians are not targeted. Strategic bombing in World War II failed the noncombatant principle. Some of the bombing in the Gulf War was criticized on the grounds of proportionality.

The Uses of the Just War Ethic

The JWE is undoubtedly the product of the Christian moral tradition. More specifically, in the modern era, it has been sustained institutionally primarily in the Catholic Church. But neither of these comments should be taken in isolation. While Catholic theologians kept the discourse alive, it has been primarily Protestant scholars who have done the most creative work in the last half-century.

Moreover, the fact that the JWE is so closely tied to the Christian tradition does not mean that other religious traditions have been silent about war and peace. Among others, Professor Sohail Hashmi of Mount Holyoke College has shown how the Islamic tradition possesses a moral argument that is parallel to that of the JWE. Michael Walzer, the author of the leading textbook on just war in American academic life, begins his analysis of Jewish thought on war with the assertion that no systematic analogue to the JWE exists in Judaism, but there are categories available to discuss war and peace.[10]

Beyond religious discourse there are two notable ways in which the philosophical categories of the JWE have been taken over and extended into wider secular discourse. The first was the way in which the moral tradition of just war thinkers—among them the 16th century natural law theorists Francisco de Vitoria and Hugo Grotius—provided a basis for the beginnings of positive international law. This transition and later development has always illustrated both shared perspectives and differences, but the moral-legal analysis of war in the modern era has created a double effort at restraint. In the latter decades of the Cold War era, several political scientists and strategic thinkers turned to just war categories as they grappled with the political-strategic challenge of containing the dangers of the nuclear age.

Politics, Strategy, Ethics: Three Challenges

Pierre Hassner, a preeminent French analyst of world politics, recently made the following assessment of the contemporary international order:

> It is not an order at all in the plain sense of the word. We live in a time of fundamental heterogeneity and contradiction pertaining both to the nature of political units and the character of tensions, solidarities and oppositions between these units.[11]

Hassner traces the development of this disorder from the end of the Cold War. Faced with the lack of a structural order, Hassner identifies two major challenges: understanding the character of modern war and facing the problem of proliferation of nuclear weapons.

I find Hassner's description of world politics persuasive, but I would describe the specific challenges a bit differently. I have argued previously, and will continue to do so here, that U.S. foreign policy, and the broader international system, face a three-dimensional problem;[12] each dimension is a threat to international order (the global common good) in itself, but at times the three are fused in a single policy challenge.

> "The inauguration of air warfare, the advent of the nuclear age and the increasing sophistication and destructive capability to take the war to the adversary's homeland and domestic society raised profound moral questions."

The three dimensions are: managing weapons of mass destruction, deciding about humanitarian intervention, and responding to transnational terrorism. Each of these issues has a distinct history, complete in itself; each combines issues of strategy and moral choice. All three were part of the debate about Iraq in 2002–2003, and they could coalesce again in other parts of the globe. Just War criteria are relevant, indeed necessary, to determine a coherent response to the three issues as they relate to the global common good.

Redefining the Nuclear Threat

While WMD define a class of multiple weapons, the concentration here will be on the most urgent problem, addressing nuclear weapons in an international order vastly different from the Cold War context.

Since their invention and use 62 years ago, nuclear weapons have posed a unique threat to the JWE. At the heart of this moral theory of war is the principle of limitation. The only morally legitimate use of force is a limited use—limited to a narrow range of specific causes and limited in its methods and means. Nuclear weapons promise war without limits. While this fact remains true today, the political-strategic shape of the nuclear challenge has changed. The Cold War threat focused upon two global powers with thousands of weapons and the threat of a catastrophic clash guaranteeing millions of casualties.

In the shadow of this cosmic problem another threat, proliferation of nuclear weapons, held a secondary position. Today proliferation to state and non-state actors has become the principal problem. The U.S.-Russian relationship is hardly smooth and simple, but a massive nuclear exchange is unlikely, if not unthinkable.

What clearly must be thought about and addressed is the danger of a world of multiple sources of nuclear danger, quite beyond the present nine nuclear states. The Cold War ethical issues regarding nuclear weapons began with the objective of preventing their use under any conditions. This objective was a shared goal among moralists and strategists. Deterrence was the primary method of restraining use; here moralists and strategists partially shared positions, with the former often questioning specific elements of deterrence (targeting, threats, intentions). Finally, significant consensus existed in support of arms control and disarmament.

The moral issues embedded in proliferation policy include the following: the rationale of the nonproliferation regime, the role of deterrence, and the responses proposed against proliferating states. The heart of the nonproliferation regime has been the Nonproliferation Treaty. The NPT seeks to prevent nuclear states from sharing nuclear weapons or the means to produce them with others, and it seeks to dissuade non-nuclear states from pursuing nuclear status. The treaty makes two promises: Non-nuclear states will have access to nuclear power for peaceful purposes, and the nuclear states will pursue the road to disarmament. The latter promise is clearly unfulfilled; the former can be a source of contention.

The NPT has been successful (188 signatories), and yet it is increasingly fragile. At the core of its fragility is a declining belief in the rationale of the treaty, its legitimacy, and its fairness. To return to Hassner, "the present nuclear order, as institutionalized by the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, has lost its legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of most of the non-Western world."[13]

Legitimacy carries a legal sense, credibility a moral quality; together they point to a fundamental truth: In a world of sovereign independent states, if some are to abstain from what others possess, there must be a compelling strategic and moral case to do so. The strategic rationale of NPT is systemic safety; the system as a whole will be safer if nuclear weapons are not regarded as "normal,"

something to which all should aspire. The moral rationale seeks to reinforce and universalize what Nobel Laureate Thomas Schelling has described as the nuclear taboo.[14]

Both the strategic and moral arguments are challenged by the existence of nine nuclear states, none of which show significant inclination to disarm. The loss of legitimacy and credibility is rooted in a sense among many that the regime is unfair and, therefore, unjust. In terms of the JWE, there is not a "just cause" to continue the two-tiered system. When this judgment is then combined with the multiple reasons why states seek nuclear weapons—regional dangers, status, the perks which seem to accompany status—the NPT is directly threatened.

In the face of an eroding rationale for the NPT regime, what responses are proposed? There are two: deterrence and preemption. They pose quite different moral questions. Deterrence, of course, was the central strategic concept in managing the nuclear relationship of the superpowers. Although one could never prove it was the reason that nuclear weapons were not used during the Cold War, it was widely understood to be the major restraint on use. Its restraining influence was widely endorsed by moralists, but questions and critiques accompanied the support they gave deterrence. The major issue was whether restraint was purchased by a threat to kill civilians purposefully and in large numbers.[15]

Does deterrence fit into the policy of nonproliferation? The Bush administration has cast doubt on the effectiveness of deterrence as part of its argument for a preemptive use of force. Undoubtedly deterrence may carry little weight for terrorist groups. But the disparagement of deterrence is a mistake strategically and morally. Terrorist threats must be addressed, but the primary threat of proliferation lies with states; deterrence clearly has a capacity to restrain states, even ideologically driven regimes.

Moreover, the kind of threat needed to give states pause about moving toward nuclear weapons need not be the massive indiscriminate strategy often associated with the days of the superpower conflict. A strategy of deterrence, confined to discriminate and proportionate threats, would meet the requirements of both just cause and just means.

Responding to Terrorism

The acknowledgement that deterrence will have limited effect on the minds or methods of terrorists is only one dimension of a broader truth. Classical conventional war also has limited potential against the threat of terrorism. The "long war" in both Iraq and Afghanistan testifies to the role that conventional combat can and cannot achieve against the methods of terrorism.

From the earliest days after 9/11, observers such as British Parliamentarian Michael Howard cautioned against the conceptual design of a "war" on terrorism.[16] Howard's point was not to rule out military force, but to stress its relative role in a broader strategy needed to counter terrorist threats. From the perspective of the JWE, terrorism of the 9/11 variety raises three questions.[17]

First, it is transnational terror, a reality somewhat different in its scope, range, and destructive capability from previously encountered terrorist groups within states. Its transnational character

raises issues of "proper authority." In a world that is now an intricate pattern of states, transnational organizations, and international institutions, do terrorist groups have any political standing?

Similar questions have been faced before, even in the medieval era, and the argument that coalesced since the 17th century at both the moral and legal level has been to restrict proper authority standing to states and, more recently, to the U.N. Security Council. In any discussion of terrorist groups, it is possible that they may appeal to "just causes" as their motivation. Recognition of that fact, however, should not be expanded to "proper authority."

The global common good is in major aspects an appeal to issues of justice; the just cause category can be used to identify why some groups are moved to terrorist tactics. But the global common good is also about issues of national and systemic security, giving terrorist groups moral standing as "proper authorities" to use force is a fundamental strategic and moral mistake. It threatens the already minimal standards of order (a common good value) that exist in the anarchical world of international relations.

This denial of moral standing to terrorist groups is powerfully reinforced by their second characteristic: Terrorists (past and present) deliberately attack, often as their primary target, civilian centers. In much of the debate about terrorism, this is the defining characteristic of terror. As noted above, within the JWE, the prohibition of directly intended attacks on civilians is treated as an absolute moral rule without exceptions.

The third characteristic of 9/11 terrorism is its appeal to religious reasons for war. Two comments are immediately necessary: First, as was evident in the medieval crusades and in the modern "wars of religion" in Europe, appeal to a religious rationale is not unique to today's terrorists; second, the appeal then and now can be seen as corrupting an authentic religious tradition rather than supporting it. From the perspective of the JWE, as it is understood today, the appeal to religious reasons for war is regressive and should be opposed. Michael Walzer identifies a statement from Francisco de Vitovia that captures the lessons learned from religious wars. Vitovia simply said, "Difference of religion cannot be a cause of just war."[18]

The categories of the JWE—cause, authority, and means—are all relevant to an assessment of modern terrorism. But moral categories alone do not constitute a strategic response. Given the character of transnational terrorism, how should the strategic and moral elements of a response be related? First, while it is clearly too late to rethink the wisdom of defining the response as a "war on terror," it is clearly possible (and now widely accepted) to recognize that the military component is a limited instrument of resistance to terrorism.

When Michael Howard warned against the U.S. definition of the "war" strategy, he was drawing in part on the British experience of confronting domestic terrorism. His proposal was for much more attention to legal, police, and political measures at the international level. Clear recognition and acceptance of a limited military role is a first step in revising strategy.

A second step, again more broadly accepted today than in 2001-2003, is that transnational terrorism can only be addressed in a multilateral manner; the recent retreat of the Bush

administration from the advocacy of unilateralism may be very late, but still should be fostered as much as possible.

Third, the issue of religion and war must be addressed with clarity. The West has had its experience with this combustible mixture. As noted, the long-term lesson adopted was to build a wall between them as much as possible. Islam has a different way of relating the political and the religious, so insulating war from religious appeals is a more challenging task.

Moreover, there are multiple relevant actors involved: Scholars within the tradition and across traditions can clarify the issues doctrinally, but political leaders may have quite different purposes in using religious appeals than scholars do. Finally, religious leaders at the local level, with constituencies and communities of support, can have different interests and objectives than either scholars or political leaders. The solution for those politically or religiously outside the Islamic community is to engage these various actors, not to invade another religious community, but to find as many relationships of restraint as possible.

Finally, there is the proposal about preemption. As noted above, it is the alternative strategy to deterrence—alternative in the sense that its proponents argue that deterrence has been eroded as a viable response to terrorism. Hence the National Security Strategy of 2002 (reiterated often since then) states the case for preemption: "In the Cold War, especially following the Cuban missile crisis, we faced a generally status quo, risk-averse adversary. Deterrence was an effective defense. But deterrence based only upon the threat of retaliation is less likely to work against leaders of rogue states. … Traditional concepts of deterrence will not work against a terrorist enemy…"[19]

> "…as was evident in the medieval crusades and in the modern 'wars of religion' in Europe, appeal to a religious rationale is not unique to today's terrorists…the appeal then and now can be seen as corrupting an authentic religious tradition rather than supporting it."

In the vigorous debate since 2002, distinctions have been drawn between preemption and preventive war. The meaning of the distinction is that preemption is generally supported as a response to a certain, substantial, and imminent threat; preventive war is undertaken against an uncertain, future possible threat and finds little support normatively or strategically. Columbia University professor and Brookings Institution Fellow Richard Betts draws the distinction concisely: "Preventive war is almost always a bad choice, strategically as well as morally. Preemption is another matter—legitimate in principle and sometimes advisable in practice."[20]

I would press Betts's useful distinction one step further, between preemption as a tactic—forced upon a state by near certain aggression—and preemption as a declaratory posture announced to the world by the preeminent military power. The latter declaratory posture easily establishes a

precedent for others. Legitimating preemption for everyone shifts the security dynamic of world politics toward quick resort to force, exactly what the JWE seeks to avoid.

In the Just War tradition, the medieval authors and their descendants distinguished between defensive and offensive war. Both were regarded as in principle legitimate: the former to resist attacks, the latter to punish criminal action or to recover what had been unjustly taken. Catholic theologian John Courtney Murray's interpretation of the tradition that only defensive wars (defense of self or others) were now legitimate has found broad if not universal agreement among moralists.[21]

Preventive war falls under the prohibition against offensive war; preemption could meet defensive war standards. To do so it would have to satisfy three tests: just cause (a truly imminent threat), proper authority (acting with appropriate legitimization, defensive war, or authorization from the U.N. Security Council), and last resort (other options are ineffective).

Reshaping the Norm of Nonintervention

Both WMD and terrorism have been closely tied to the Iraq debate. But between the end of the Cold War and the attacks on 9/11, a distinctly different issue of war and morality assumed center stage. It was the challenge of humanitarian intervention.[22] The cases ran from the Balkans to the Horn of Africa. The issue was neither interstate war nor transnational war; it was intrastate conflict. Often it was the product of ethnic, economic, political, and religious conflict; its results were devastating, reaching a climax in Rwanda.

It posed a double challenge: normative and tactical. The normative challenge involved a clash of norms—moral arguments for intervention and legal arguments upholding the positive law of nonintervention. The tactical issue was who could and would act effectively even if consensus could be reached that a duty existed to defend those under attack in Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, and Kosovo.

The legal prohibition against intervention has a solid pedigree. To some degree it is rooted in the memories of the religious wars of 16th and 17th centuries. It also has normative status in the U.N. Charter. Its rationale arises from the political setting of sovereign states—none acknowledge a superior political authority. To moderate this state of anarchy, nonintervention is designed to deprive states of a right to use force because of internal conditions in another state.

As Catherine Guicherd, the former Deputy for Policy Co-ordination to the Secretary General at NATO Parlimentary Assembly, and others have observed, the four-century old norm of nonintervention has come under pressure from the emerging body of human rights law.[23] Conceived and fostered within the United Nations, it asserts an obligation of states to attend to human rights violations within other states. But it did not assert a right to military intervention; that question arose forcefully in the 1990s. Two responses to it were developed.

The JWE was used to produce a "Just Intervention" argument. Briefly, it upheld nonintervention as a presumption, but acknowledged reasons to override the presumption. The reasons constituted "just causes" for intervention; genocide was the clearest case but others, such as failed states,

expanded the list of exceptions. The criteria of last resort, proper authority and just means, then filled out tests for just intervention.

The second response built on Just War categories. It was the product of an authoritative commission sponsored by the Canadian government: The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. The Commission sought to redefine the question of intervention. Its report, "The Responsibility to Protect," captured the innovative move it made to resolve the moral-legal tension.

An essential element in its argument was a partial redefining of the concept of sovereignty. Rather than simply protecting the rights of sovereign states, sovereignty was viewed as a responsibility of a state to its population and to the international community. When the responsibility was unfulfilled, others had a duty to defend those being harmed, as Elizabeth Ferris explores in depth in her essay elsewhere in this collection.

Together, the JWE and this reconceptualization of legitimate intervention under the banner of The Responsibility to Protect provided the beginnings of a more coherent normative order regarding humanitarian intervention. It also left open the large question of how far such reasoning would go in legitimizing intervention for reasons beyond humanitarian concerns. That question was at the heart of the Iraq debate, where advocates for invasion appealed to all three issues discussed here: WMD, terror, and intervention.

A preventive war was undertaken on what we now know were mistaken or misrepresented grounds. The JWE does speak to these three security challenges of our day. It should not be understood, in my view, to have supported war in Iraq. But Iraq will not be the only case when these issues will be faced again.

Endnotes

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5. Cf.: Childress, "Just War Theories"; Ralph B. Potter, *The Moral Logic of War* (Philadelphia: The United Presbyterian Church, n.d.); John Finnis, "The Ethics of War and Peace in the Catholic Natural Law Tradition." In Terry Nardin, ed., *The Ethics of War and Peace: Religions and Secular Perspectives* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), pp. 15–39.

6. Childress, "Just War Theories," pp. 430–434.

7. "Aggression is the name we give to the crime of war," Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, p. 51.

8. R. J. Vincent, *Nonintervention and International Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974); Adam Roberts, "The Road to Hell: A Critique of Humanitarian Intervention," *Harvard International Review* (Fall 1993): 10–13.

9. The uniquely detached contribution of Paul Ramsey to the JWE is focused almost wholly on the means of warfare. Cf.: Paul Ramsey, *The Just War: Force and Political Responsibility* (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1968); Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Nuclear Ethics* (New York: The Free Press, 1986).

10. Cf.: Sohail Hashmi, "Interpreting the Islamic Ethics of War" and Michael Walzer, "War and Peace in the Jewish Tradition." In Nardin and Mapel, eds., *The Ethics of War and Peace*.

11. Pierre Hassner, "The Fate of a Century," *The American Interest* vol. II (July/August 2007): 38.

12. J. Bryan Hehir, "The Moral Measurement of War: A Tradition of Continuity and Change." In John D. Carlson and Erik C Owens, eds., *The Sacred and the Sovereign: Religion and International Politics* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2003).

13. Hassner, "The Fate of a Century," p. 43.

14. Thomas Schelling, "An Astonishing Sixty Years: The Legacy of Hiroshima," *American Economic Review*, 96 (Sept. 2006): 929, 937.

15. Cf.: John Finnis, Joseph Boyle and Germain Grisez, *Nuclear Deterrence, Morality and Realism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

16. Michael Howard, "What's In a Name?" *Foreign Affairs* 81 (Jan./Feb.2002): 8–13.

17. The categories used here are those also used in Hehir, "The Moral Measurement of War."

18. Michael Walzer, *Arguing about War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 4.

19. The White House National Security Council, "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America" (2002), p. 15.

20. Richard Betts, "Striking First: A History of Thankfully Lost Opportunities," *Ethics and International Affairs* 17 (2003): 18.

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The End of Barbarism?
The Phenomenon of Torture and the Search for the Common Good

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf and Rev. Dr. William F. Schulz

South African novelist J. M. Coetzee won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2003 for, among other books, his 1982 classic, *Waiting for the Barbarians*. In one passage in that work a large crowd awaits the appearance of a military contingent leading a group of prisoners ("Barbarians!") who are tied to each other by a rope around their necks. In addition, a metal wire has been looped through a hole in each prisoner's cheek which connects to a hole in his hand. "It makes them meek as lambs," one soldier says. "They think of nothing but how to keep very still."

The prisoners are paraded in front of the crowd so that "everyone has a chance … to prove to his children that the barbarians are real." Then the Colonel of Police steps forward.

> Stooping over each prisoner … he rubs a handful of dust into his naked back and writes a word with a stick of charcoal … "ENEMY … ENEMY … ENEMY … ENEMY." He steps back and folds his hands … Then the beating begins.[1]

Victims of torture sport no common profile. While they have often come from the ranks of racial or religious minorities within their societies, history is replete with examples of the once mighty whose fall from grace has led to brutal torment. But one thing that virtually everyone who has been subjected to such mistreatment has in common is that he or she has been defined as alien to the dominant culture—one of "them," not one of "us;" in some sense less than fully human. In short, a "barbarian."

No attitude toward our fellow creatures could be more at odds with the three great Abrahamic faith traditions than this. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all explicitly teach that humankind is created in God's image, by which they mean not that human beings resemble God physically but that the human spirit is a reflection of God's own.[2]

Indeed, so exalted is the dignity of the human soul that in the Quran God commands the angels to prostrate themselves before it: "And when your Lord announced to the angels, 'I shall create a human from [a kind of] baked clay. When I shall have fashioned him and breathed into him of My Spirit, fall in prostration to him'" (Quran, 15:28-29).

So intimate is the identification of the God of the Christian gospels with His children that no matter how poor, how thirsty, how naked, no matter whether they be sick or imprisoned, He and they are one: "'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was

sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. Then the righteous will answer him… 'And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me'" (Matthew: 25: 35-40).[3]

And so important is human dignity (*kvod ha-briot* or "the dignity of created beings") in the Jewish tradition that it overrides rabbinic authority itself.[4] This applies to the sinner—even to the *rasha* or criminal—as well as to the virtuous, for dignity is independent of one's actions. It is so intrinsic to one's humanity as a creature of God "made in the likeness of God" that to deprive a human being of dignity, to humiliate and torture another person, is quite literally to seek to deprive God of His dignity, to humiliate and torture God.

> God is at stake in human relations, harmed and violated through acts of cruelty and degradation, even in retaliation or self-defense … *One must not shame and insult another human being, created in God's likeness, for to do so is to shame and insult God.*[5]

The reason the two greatest commandments common to these religious traditions—to love God with all of our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love our neighbors (our fellow human beings) as we love ourselves—are of *equal* importance is that they are the flip side of one another: to love God is to love one's neighbor and vice versa. Upon these two commandments, Jesus Christ promptly adds in Matthew 22:40, hang all the Law and the Prophets.

"Laws not only provide rules of conduct; they also establish cultural norms. The law is one of the primary means by which government encourages its citizens to be their best selves; hence laws ought to reflect our highest ethical imperatives and not seek to cleanse society of its dirty hands before the fact."

And Jesus applied the second commandment not just to our immediate neighbors or our own clan but to anyone in need, including social outcasts (Luke 14:13). Even more explicit is his teaching at the synagogue in his hometown of Nazareth where he quotes the prophet Isaiah and identifies himself with the ancient charge "to preach good news to the poor …, proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those who are oppressed." (Luke 4: 18). In spite of being the victim himself of excruciating torture commemorated each year on the darkest day of the Christian calendar, he prayed that God would forgive those who tortured him.[6]

Similarly, the core of Islamic law, the Sharia, is built on these two fundamental commandments, with the sole difference that "to *honor* God and neighbor," rather than "to *love* God and neighbor,"

more accurately captures the nuances of these commandments in Islamic legal language.[7] The supreme importance of honor and human dignity (known as `ird or *karama*) is reflected in the fact that they are among the six objectives of the Sharia (*maqasid al-shari`a*) that Muslim jurists unanimously agree the Sharia's laws seek to protect, preserve and further. Even today in many parts of the non-Western world, to deprive someone of his dignity and honor, to make him "lose face," is to make him suffer a fate worse than death.

There is, then, a code of behavior that is based on eternal ethical principles common to the Abrahamic faith traditions, namely, that if we would love and honor the Holy, we must treat our fellow human beings with basic respect. This principle in turn is fundamental to any notion of the "common good." For the common good presumes that human beings share certain needs and values that transcend religious, racial or political differences.

For Americans this notion of shared dignity is enshrined in the words of the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Such rights are "unalienable" exactly because they are given to all human beings by the Creator and not by any human agency. They inhere in the very fact of our being human and cannot be suspended or revoked by any government. It is therefore as contrary to the founding principles of this country as it is to the basic tenets of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to act in a way that denies those unalienable rights, and one of those rights is surely the right not to be tortured.[8] What could be more at odds with Life, Liberty, and Happiness than that?

Yet despite the teachings of these three great traditions and our Declaration of Independence, torture persists. It is practiced by more than a hundred countries around the world and, tragically, we must count the United States among them. But scores of non-state actors are guilty of the use of torture as well.[9] The principal focus of this essay is U.S. policy, but our criticisms of the United States are in no way meant to justify the use of brutality by others, to ignore the heinousness of kidnappings, bombings, and beheadings, or to absolve America's adversaries of moral responsibility for their own actions.

Moreover, misguided as the American use of torture is, it has arisen in a context of genuine threat to American interests and, indeed, to American lives. We would in no way dismiss or belittle the justifiable fear that terrorism has struck in the hearts of many around the world. It is simply that the way the United States has chosen to respond to that fear has done enormous damage to our country's credibility. The practice of torture and ill treatment at Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan, and the secret prisons that the United States has maintained around the world to house "high value" Al Qaeda suspects has caused America's reputation for moral rectitude to plummet, even among our traditional allies.

A 2006 survey, for example, documented "a dramatic deterioration in the United States' reputation as an effective advocate of human rights in the world." Seventy-eight percent of Germans and 56 percent of the British said that the U.S. government did a "bad job" of promoting human rights. Eight years earlier, less than one in four Germans (24 percent) and Britons (22 percent) rated U.S. performance in this area as "bad."[10]

All this is hardly surprising. The repugnance torture generates in the human heart turns natural allies into skeptics and erodes the sympathies of the undecided. It has made it far harder for the United States to exert leadership even where its motives may be pure and far easier for America's adversaries to recruit new minions to their cause. Few images, for example, have been more damaging to the United States' interests around the world, to our security as a nation and to the safety of our troops, than the image of the hooded prisoner at Abu Ghraib, his arms extended, his fingers connected to putative electrodes.

That photograph became emblematic of U.S. hypocrisy and contributed mightily to a diminution of American credibility and stature. As two distinguished Marine Corps commandants wrote recently,

> Victory in [a counterinsurgency war like Iraq] comes when the enemy loses legitimacy in the society from which it seeks recruits and thus loses its "recuperative power…" Torture methods…have nurtured the recuperative power of the enemy. *This war will be won or lost not on the battlefield but in the minds of potential supporters who have not yet thrown in their lot with the enemy. If we forfeit our values by signaling that they are negotiable in situations of grave or imminent danger, we drive those undecideds into the arms of the enemy. This way lies defeat, and we are well down the road to it.*[11] [emphasis added]

No matter what its short-term rationale, torture is almost always self-defeating. How, then, might we overcome this plague? In order to put an end to torture, we first need to understand its grip on us. If we would vanquish it, we first need to lay it bare.

The Attraction of Torture and the Case of the "Ticking Bomb"

Why is torture such a widespread phenomenon despite all the strictures against it, both religious and legal? A South African neuropsychologist has recently theorized that cruelty, especially in males, is grounded in an adaptive reaction from the Paleozoic era when early humans were predators and had to hunt for their food. The appearance of pain and blood in the prey was a signal of triumph, and gradually the evocation of such reactions—howls of pain, the appearance of blood—in our fellow humans became associated with personal and social power, with the success of the hunt.[12]

Even if this were true, we are *human* because we have the capacity to overcome those ancient evolutionary impulses through reason and faith. Not every person by any means ends up a torturer. It is in large measure a "learned" behavior, requiring the sanction of authority (few torturers operate without at least the implicit approval, even encouragement, of their superiors); a rationale ("These are the people who are threatening our country." "These are the people who are killing your comrades."); dehumanization of the victims ("ENEMY! ENEMY! ENEMY! ENEMY!") and an expectation of impunity.

And what is true of torturers themselves is true as well of the societies that tolerate them. Be it the ancient Greeks and Romans, whose Wise Men assured them that the only way to solve crimes and force confessions was to torture slaves because slaves, unlike free citizens, lacked the capacity

to reason and hence could not dissemble. Or be it the Hutus, who responded in 1994 to the call of their leaders to eliminate the "cockroaches" (in many cases their longtime Tutsi neighbors with whom they had lived for years in peace) in order to save Rwanda from minority rule. Societies put up with torture when respected leaders fan flames of fear or opportunity and identify those who they claim do not share in a common humanity and hence no longer deserve the protection of a common understanding of rights.

> "The United States has every right to defend itself, its people and its values. But in doing so, it must act consistent with its values or it risks sacrificing its leadership capacity and moral authority, thereby making its adversaries' task easier."

It is no coincidence, then, that as many as 63 percent of Americans in some public opinion surveys have said that torture is justified at least occasionally.[13] After all, American opinion leaders have adopted polarizing language that divides the world into "them" (the "terrorists," "Islamofascists") and "us" ("those who love freedom," "Western civilization"). Samuel Huntington's notion of a clash of Western and Islamic civilizations has become the lens through which many in the West viewed 9/11 and subsequent events. And the Bush Administration has demanded that foreign governments declare whether they were "with us or with the terrorists."

Fear can play havoc with moral sensibilities, and American leaders have been quick to contend that only "tough questioning" can keep Americans safe. But might that sometimes be true? Might there be some rational uses for torture, some circumstances under which torture is indeed justified—to procure vital information, for example?

Some of the world's most distinguished philosophers, among them the 18th century utilitarian thinker Jeremy Bentham, have defended what is often called the "ticking bomb argument" for torture—the idea that it is not only ethical but perhaps even morally obligatory to do everything in one's power to extract information from a subject quickly if that information will lead to the saving of innocent lives.[14] And, indeed, from a strictly utilitarian, cost-benefit point of view, a plausible argument can be made that torturing one person to a point short of death in order to save the lives of dozens of others is a defensible act.

But quite apart from whatever qualms we may have about brutalizing another human being, proponents of the ticking bomb argument rarely offer adequate reply to all those objections which make a case that looks so appealing in the abstract crumble into dust in real life. Why, for example, are there so few confirmed instances in which ticking bomb torture worked? Why do the vast majority of professional interrogators claim that torturing a detainee is the least effective way to get accurate information?[15]

Or from another moral vantage point, how certain do we need to be that the suspect has the life-saving information we seek in order to justify torture? Fifty percent? Ten percent? What if the

torture of the suspect in custody doesn't produce the desired effect but torture of his two-year-old daughter would? Is that justified to save 1,000 lives? And what if the torture of one individual in custody succeeds in producing information that saves those thousand lives but generates such resentment among his family and comrades that they then plant enough bombs to kill 10,000? What happens to our cost-benefit calculation then?

Regardless of the answer to these questions, what we know for certain is this: Rare as it is in real life to need to get information so speedily from a suspect that torture seems the only option, the original ticking bomb case for torture almost always morphs into a much larger, more unwieldy set of circumstances in which torture is utilized and justified. The rationale for the United States' use of torture at Abu Ghraib, for example, was the need to soften up the prisoners so that they would be more amenable to providing information to military intelligence not necessarily regarding imminent attacks on U.S. troops but on all aspects of the counter-insurgency.

> "But quite apart from whatever qualms we may have about brutalizing another human being, proponents of the ticking bomb argument rarely offer adequate reply to all those objections which make a case that looks so appealing in the abstract crumble into dust in real life. Why are there so few confirmed instances in which ticking bomb torture worked?"

Virtually all of the hundred plus countries that employ torture would claim that they do so in order to protect lives and defend national interests, yet it is hard to believe that they are all limiting their brutal interrogations to contexts in which bombs will go off within minutes if their questioning is not successful. And even in cases where the motives are "pure" and the need for information real, we know that such information can often be obtained through other means. Information about the 9/11 attacks, for instance, appears to have been available to the government prior to the suicide assaults on New York and Washington.[16]

Might there be ways to avoid this descent into unbridled barbarism? Should torture be legal and permissible but only in very limited circumstances in which it appears to be the sole option left to save the innocent? Harvard University Law Professor Alan Dershowitz argues that, regardless of laws or moral imperatives, public officials, when faced with a threat to their citizens, will inevitably resort to torture and therefore should be provided a mechanism through which to seek prior authorization for such conduct in the form of "torture warrants" issued by a court. This is the way, Dershowitz argues, to avoid the expansion of the category of cases in which torture will be used.[17]

Others have contended that torture should always be considered illegal and if a public official feels compelled by circumstances to violate the law, to commit what has been called "official disobedience," he or she should be forced to defend the decision after the fact, pleading necessity,

if warranted.[18] The official will then face the consequences, be they legal or in the court of public opinion. This is the route the Israeli Supreme Court opted for in eventually ruling illegal the use by security forces of "moderate physical pressure."[19]

Which route we take depends upon our view of law and its role in society. Laws not only provide rules of conduct; they also establish cultural norms. The law is one of the primary means by which government encourages its citizens to be their best selves; hence, laws ought to reflect our highest ethical imperatives and not seek to cleanse society of its dirty hands before the fact. That a law may be violated is the very reason to have it. We don't need laws to prevent people from doing that which they are already disinclined to do.

The old cry of the segregationists during the civil rights movement ("You can't legislate morality!") has been proven time and again to be false. Most people obey laws, and one of the ways cultural norms change is when a critical mass of people obey even laws they don't like. In so doing, they gradually learn that the new world they are living in may not be so bad after all. *Torture ought therefore to be outlawed under every circumstance.*

Doing Away with Torture: A Religious Imperative

To end torture—*to end all human suffering willfully imposed by humans upon others,* we may add—requires, then, an absolute commitment to obeying the golden rule in all our human interactions, from daily individual acts to state, domestic and foreign policy. Jesus' contemporary, Rabbi Hillel, described this best when asked to explain the Torah "standing on one leg." He said, *"Do not do to others that which you do not wish others to do to you. All the rest is commentary; go and learn!"* by which he meant "Go and apply this rule to *all* others, not just some." "See others not as 'the Other' but as you see yourself."

Ervin Staub, who has studied torture and genocide across a variety of cultures, notes that:

> Whereas defining people as "them" and devaluing them motivates or allows harming them, defining or perceiving them as "us," as similar to or like oneself, generates caring for them and empathy with them. People so seen are more likely to be helped and less likely to be harmed.[20]

Nor is this the only lesson religion has to teach us about torture. All three Abrahamic traditions hold that, no matter who employs it:

- Torture corrupts the hearts of the perpetrators just as readily as it destroys the bodies and souls of its victims. Consistent with the principle that whoever wrongs another wrongs him or herself, a religious perspective affirms that the nucleus of the common good is the good of the individual and that torture does harm to both perpetrator and victim alike and hence to the common values of civilization.

- Torture does enormous damage to the reputations of those who employ it, to the cause of those who would fight terrorism in the name of defending freedom and the rule of law, and to the good name of any religion under whose putative banner it is waged.

- Torture is an affront to religion itself because religion and spirituality are about the positive transformation of souls, about transforming "sinners" into "saints." It is bad faith, and bad religion, to disguise or rationalize the use of torture, be it as an instrument of government policy for some legitimate end such as protection of a populace or as a tool of terrorists who see themselves bringing "justice" to infidels. Torture for whatever reason is torture, and our religious traditions require us to call it by its true name and to repudiate it. Religion is, after all, about overcoming fears and, to the extent torture is motivated by fears, religion at its best can be a vehicle for transcending them.

Doing Away with Torture: The Role of Government

But religion alone cannot put an end to torture without the cooperation of government. Part of the job of government is to ensure the national security of its people. The United States has every right to defend itself, its people and its values. But in doing so, it must act consistent with its values or it risks sacrificing its leadership capacity and moral authority, thereby making its adversaries' task easier. Among those values are a commitment to respecting the fundamental rights and dignity of even the most evil and heinous people among us—the right to due process, for example, and the right not to be tortured even if you yourself are guilty of torture or murder. Values such as these are bedrock to the American character. If people of good will cannot offer them common affirmation, it is unlikely we will find common ground about anything.

These values are not just American values, however. All governments, as we have said, are obligated to encourage their citizens to be their best selves rather than their basest. This reflects the perennial battle, which the Prophet Muhammad described as the "Greater Jihad (struggle)," that each individual has to wage within him or herself and, indeed, which each society has to wage within itself as well. If such a struggle is to be won, it will require the building of *a coalition across the spectrum of identities*—across nations, ethnicities, religious groups, clans, and genders— all of whom collectively recognize that what people share in common is far greater than what divides them; that all people feel the need to be safe in their homes and to be treated fairly by the authorities; to pass on a better life to their children; and to enjoy their rightful share of the earth's abundance. It requires such a coalition to understand that demonic urges exist in every human being and every society and to work against them.

Can any government that suborns the intentional humiliation and capricious brutalization of those in its custody—and thereby undermines the basic human right to be treated with dignity—claim to honor the religious heritage upon which its political tradition may be based, be that tradition Jewish, Christian, or Muslim? Can an America that permits the use of torture or allies itself with other nations that do stand on its own constitutional foundations? Human rights emerge out of the common needs of humankind, giving voice to our shared misery and promise to our highest aspirations. They define what it means to be a civilized society and a reputable state. Only those governments that unequivocally repudiate the use of torture have the right to claim to be either.

Americans often underestimate the power of their example. But the United States is the only global superpower. U.S. policy and practices have enormous influence on global values that

in turn shape international geopolitical events. How the United States addresses this issue will, therefore, profoundly affect how widespread the use of torture remains around the world.

An End to Barbarism?

The Western world, led by the United States, has demonstrated that democracy, defined as government that rules by the consent of its people, is a far superior form of government to that provided by authoritarian regimes. Yet the West has yet to resolve fully how best to integrate its religious traditions into its public life. Surely the strong, empowered, and wealthy are just as much in need of religion as the weak and impoverished, but continuing debate about such issues as abortion and stem cell research reflect the fact that America still struggles with how best to express a religious impulse *within the guidelines set forth in the Constitution*, especially the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

The challenge of the Muslim world is just the reverse. Muslims have lived with cycles of economic deprivation and political disempowerment for generations, but they have not and doubtless will not ever live without their faith. Life holds no meaning without the spiritual and existential gratification that Islam has provided them for 14 centuries. The contemporary debate in the Muslim world is about how to formulate the ideal Islamic State *within the guidelines of universal human rights and principles of democratic government* consistent with Islamic law.

> ## "Torture corrupts the hearts of the perpetrators just as readily as it destroys the bodies and souls of its victims."

It is surely in the West's best interests to support this goal unambiguously, but the use of pejorative words such as "Islamofascism" is unhelpful in this regard—for such words associate Islam as a faith with the worst of authoritarianism and can be taken to imply that the West believes that Islam is inherently incompatible with democracy and human rights, which is simply untrue.[21] We need to use language and adopt policies that bridge the gap between American and Islamic values and perceptions. Americans need to understand that:

- Islam is *not* a religion of terror, nor does it sanction terrorism. Those who try to rationalize the use of terror in its name are not being true to the teachings of the Prophet.

- Islamic law supports the inalienable human rights of all people, not just Muslims, among which are the right to live a life of dignity and to secure the means to that life, including the right to property, education, and religion.

Similarly, Muslims need to be able to believe with confidence that:

- U.S. foreign policy is *not* based on the paradigm of a "clash of civilizations" with Islam; the "war on terror" is not a camouflage for a Western war on Islam.

- America does not deny Muslims the human rights it grants to other nationals or ethnicities, nor does it single out Muslims as a matter of policy for torture and mistreatment.

In order to change the first set of perceptions, Muslim leaders need to speak out forcefully and consistently against terrorism and in defense of fundamental human rights. And Americans need to be far better educated about Islam as a faith. In order to change the second set of perceptions, which is the major focus of this essay, the United States will need to undergo changes in both attitude and policy.

In some respects torture has been a symptom—dramatic and prominent, but a symptom nonetheless—of broader problems having to do with how the United States regards non-citizens and how it has chosen to conduct the war against terrorism. American law generally recognizes that non-citizen residents can claim some but not all rights under the Constitution. The notion that foreigners may be limited to a fundamentally less robust set of rights than U.S. citizens invites the kind of disparity that can result in mistreatment. Torture often follows upon discrimination. And confusion over whether the United States is pursuing a war model or a criminal justice model in dealing with alleged terrorists risks shortchanging the rights available to prisoners under either model.

Unless these larger policy issues are addressed, torture—and its continuing damage to the interests and credibility of the United States—is likely to continue. Apart from these broader issues, however, there is much that the United States could do to ensure that torture becomes a practice of the past. U.S. policymakers could:

- Establish a bipartisan national commission on interrogation to clarify policy on the treatment of detainees, especially as it applies to non-military security forces for which the status of torture as a permissible option is ambiguous.

- Close the prison at Guantanamo Bay and transfer prisoners who may legitimately be charged with a crime to the U.S. judicial system.

- Restore *habeas corpus* rights for all detainees in U.S. custody, citizen or non-citizen.

- Close all secret prisons and end the practice of extraordinary rendition.

- Give the International Committee of the Red Cross access to all detainees in U. S. custody.

- Via Congressional action, prohibit use of funds for CIA programs that employ interrogatory techniques of a cruel and inhumane nature.

- Limit all U. S. government agencies to interrogatory techniques described in the Army field Manual on Intelligence Interrogations.

In addition, there is much the United States could do to change the negative perception of its leadership around the world, especially in Muslim communities. It could:

- Ratify the International Criminal Court instead of attempting to undermine it.

- Make a concerted effort to end the slaughter in Darfur, thereby demonstrating that U.S. leadership and resources can be used for constructive ends, not just damaging ones.

- Find a variety of ways to reiterate U.S. support for the international system without pretending that that system is without flaws—either by ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child, joining the U.N. Human Rights Council and using that forum to fight for our values, or codifying our support for the recently-minted U.N. doctrine of the "responsibility to protect."[22]

- Support economic development in OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference) nations.

- Urge OIC nations to co-sponsor with Western nations inter-religious human rights conferences, meetings, and workshops between the Abrahamic religions to delineate commonalities that can become part of national and international policy.

Finally, religious communities and leaders themselves can contribute significantly to the struggle against torture by joining the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (www.nrcat.org), signing the "National Denominational and Faith Group Leaders Statement against Torture" or the NRCAT's "Statement of Conscience," and supporting the action agenda of the organization.

In her new book *Inventing Human Rights: a History,* historian Lynn Hunt argues that the contemporary notion of human rights could not have arisen until the moral imagination had been sufficiently refined to recognize that your suffering and mine bear an intimate likeness. [23] Such moral imagination is often threatened by fear, uncertainty, or exhaustion. But the imperative it advances is one that all great religious traditions—and certainly the three we speak of here—readily share.[24] If anything ought to remind us of our common human fragility, of the fact that all blood flows red, even the blood of my adversaries, it is torture. That is why the rejection of torture offers as promising a vehicle as any for the proclamation of a common good, across religious traditions and civilizations: an acknowledgment of our common frailty, an affirmation of our common bonds, and a recognition that to act "barbarically" against those we regard as "barbarians" is to put in peril not just our lives but our humanity itself.

Endnotes

1. J. M. Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), pp. 102-105.

2. Genesis 5:1 and Ahmad b. Hanbal, *Sahih Bukhari,* hadith number 5759.

3. See: Evangelicals for Human Rights, "An Evangelical Declaration Against Torture: Protecting Human Rights in an Age of Terror" (n.d.), available at www.evangelicalsforhumanrights.org/pb/wp_abaf1d69/wp_abaf1d69.html?0.06 0027795951972496.

4. As the Meiri summarizes: "*Kvod-ha-briot* is very highly prized.…The rabbis laid down a cardinal rule: great is human dignity, which overrides any negative, rabbinic commandment…" Rabbis for Human Rights: North America, "A Rabbinic Resource on Jewish Values and the Issue of Torture" (2005), p. 7.

5. Ibid., from an interpretation of a classic *midrash* by Rabbi Tanhuma.

6. For a medical description of the torture Jesus endured on the Cross, see William D. Edwards, Wesley J. Gabel, and Floyd E. Hosmer, "On the Physical Death of Jesus Christ," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 255 (March 1986): 1445.

7. God's commandments contained in about 250 Quranic commandments and 1,200 Prophetic commandments.

8. As codified in the Convention Against Torture, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and many other domestic and international human rights instruments.

9. Amnesty International, "Amnesty International Report 2007" (2007).

10. "Publics in Europe and India See U.S. Violating International Law at Guantanamo," *World Public Opinion*, July 17, 2006, available at www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/btjusticehuman_rightsra/229.php?nid=&id=&pnt=229&lb=bthr.

11. Charles C. Krulak and Joseph P. Hoar, "It's Our Cage, Too: Torture Betrays Us and Breeds New Enemies," *Washington Post*, May 17, 2007.

12. See: Victor Nell, "Cruelty's Rewards: The Gratifications of Perpetrators and Spectators," *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 29 (2006), available at http://journals.cambridge.org/download.php?file=%2FBBS%2FBBS29_03%2FS0140525X06009058a.pdf&code=0109c5cd8f7ca4fbe5fb4dfe7e2a40f0.

13. Fifteen percent say it is "often" justified; 31 percent say it is "sometimes" justified, and 17 percent say it is "rarely" justified. Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "America's Place in the World" (Nov. 17, 2005).

14. Jeremy Bentham, "Of Torture," as cited in: W. L. Twining and P. E. Twining, "Bentham on Torture," *Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly* 24 (1973): 345-356.

15. A 1963 CIA training manual, for example, observed that "interrogatees who have withstood pain are more difficult to handle by other methods. The effect has not been to repress the subject but to restore his confidence and maturity." ("The Case Against Torture," *The Village Voice*, Nov. 28-Dec. 4, 2001.) In contrast, if the torture victim "cracks," he is likely to say anything to make the pain stop. Art Hulnick, a former CIA officer who interviewed North Korean prisoners after the Korean War, reported that prisoners taken into custody by American troops and treated humanely were much more forthcoming, over time, than those held by the South Koreans and tortured. ("U.S. Ships Al Qaeda Suspects to Arab States," *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 26, 2002.) The FBI teaches 30 techniques to make suspects talk without crossing the line into mistreatment—from inducing boasts to making false promises. The secret for "human intelligence collectors," as the questioners are now called, is to establish "positive control." Retired Army major general Bill Nash describes that as "imposing on [prisoners] a psychological sense of isolation, domination and futility, and trying to establish the conditions by which you can then reward them for information, as opposed to punish them." ("Captives: Rumsfeld Defends Treatment by U.S. of Cuban Detainees," *The New York Times,* Jan. 22, 2002.) As Christopher Whitcomb, a former FBI interrogation instructor put it, "Interrogation is an art form, not a street fight. It is built on guile, perseverance, and a keen understanding of how people respond to need. People will tell you anything if you present the questions in the proper context. You simply have to find the right way to ask." (Christopher Whitcomb, "The Shadow War," *Gentleman's Quarterly,* Jan. 2002.) Skepticism about the effectiveness of harsh techniques has been reinforced recently by a group of experts advising U.S. intelligence agencies who have decried such techniques as outmoded and unreliable. ("Advisers Fault Harsh Methods In Interrogation," *The New York Times*, May 30, 2007.)

16. See: National Commission on Terrorist Acts in the United States, "Chapter 8: The System Was Blinking Red," *Final Report: The 9/11 Commission Report* (n.d.), available at http://origin.www.gpoaccess.gov/911.

17. Alan Dershowitz, *Why Terrorism Works: Understanding the Threat, Responding to the Challenge* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

18. See: Michael Walzer, "Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands," and Oren Gross, "The Prohibition of Torture and the Limits of the Law." In Sanford Levinson, ed., *Torture: A Collection* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

19. Supreme Court of Israel: Judgment Concerning the Legality of the General Security Service's Interrogation Methods, 38 ILM 1471, 1488 (1999).

20. Ervin Staub, "The Psychology and Culture of Torture and Torturers." In Peter Suedfeld, ed., *Psychology and Torture* (New York: Hemisphere, 1990), p. 53.

21. Based on the directives of the Prophet Muhammad, Islamic law prohibits torture or maiming of the enemy, for example, even in a just war. The Prophet allowed literate enemy captives to ransom themselves by teaching a number of illiterate Muslims, thereby emphasizing the importance of education as a human right.

22. For a more detailed list of recommended actions, see: "Ten Steps to Restore America's Moral Authority," available at http://hrw.org/english/docs/2007/02/22/usdom15384.htm.

23. Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2007).

24. Such an affirmation goes well beyond Judaism, Christianity, and Islam as well. According to the *Bodhicharyavatar of Santiveda* in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, for example, "All have the same sorrows, same joys as I…so likewise this manifold universe has its sorrows and joys in common…Why should I not conceive my fellow's body as my own self?" As quoted in: Darrell J. Fasching, "Authority and Religious Experience." In William Schweiker, ed., *The Blackwell Companion to Religious Ethics* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), p. 66.
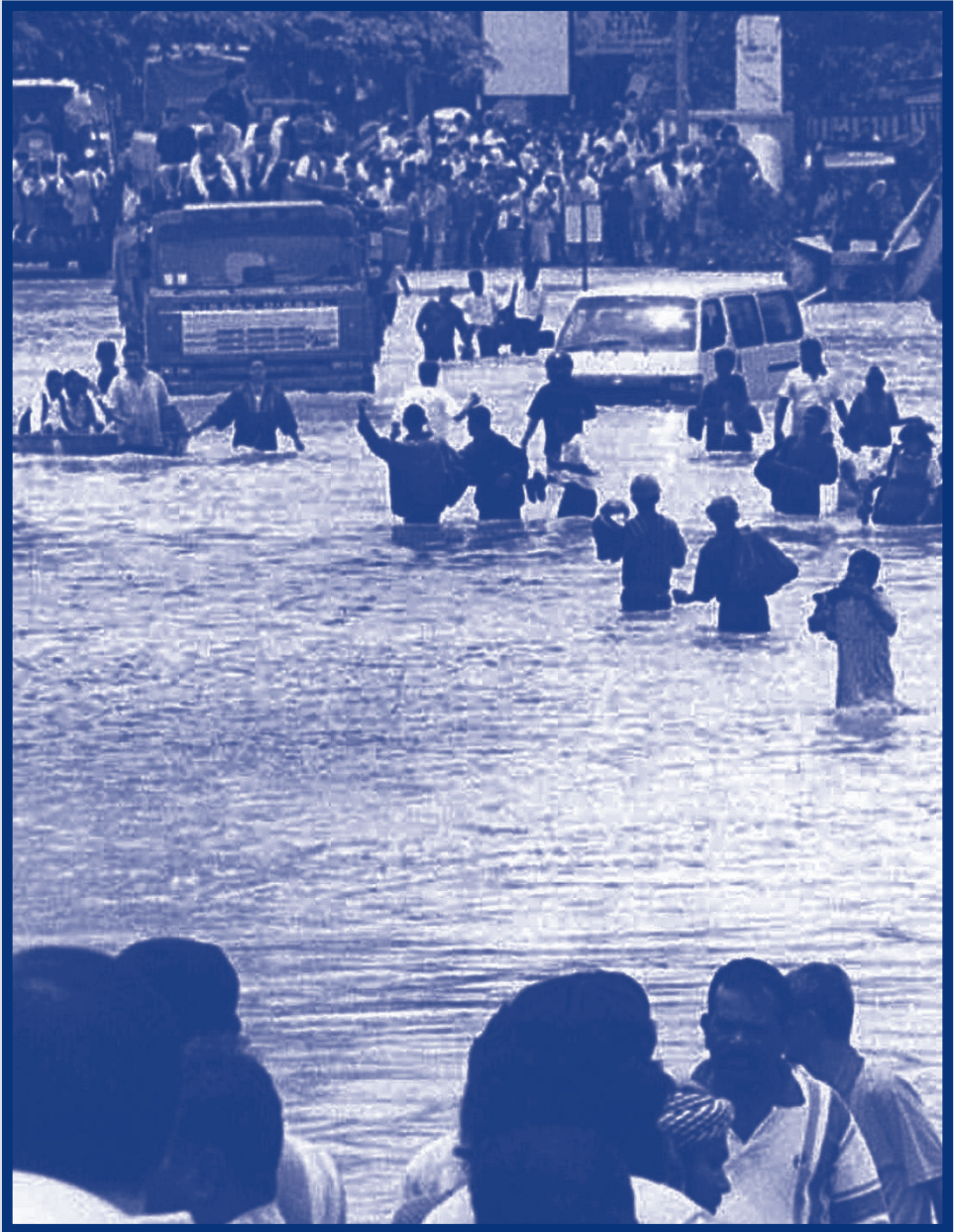
AP Photo

Forging a Response to Climate Change
Why Communities of Faith Are Essential

Barbara Lerman-Golomb and Melody C. Barnes, with Kumar Garg

On Christmas Eve in 1968 one of the first (and most famous) pictures of Earth was taken from space. Called *Earthrise*, it was taken aboard Apollo 8. Millions watched on television and millions more were captivated by the reprinted picture—a small, beautiful Earth against the blackness of space. Awed by the image outside their window, the astronauts on board read aloud from the book of *Genesis*. The next day was Christmas, and poet Archibald MacLeish expressed humanity's shared wonderment at the sight of our planet:

> To see the Earth as it truly is, small and blue and beautiful in that ethereal silence where it floats, is to see ourselves riders on the Earth together, brothers on that bright loveliness in the eternal cold—brothers who know now that they are truly brothers.[1]

Earthrise captured an essential truth—that whatever physical borders or cultural differences separate us, we are a global community that will collectively suffer, or benefit, from how we care for our planet. The consequences of our action (and inaction) will be borne not only by us and those near to us, but by billions of our fellow citizens around the globe.

Forty years after the Earth picture, such consequences are painfully clear, especially to a small community in the Pacific Islands. Due to rising sea levels, the people of Lateu in the island nation of Vanuatu were the first to be formally displaced due to global warming.[2] Two years ago the community moved their village—houses, furniture, personal possessions, village water pumps, and other infrastructure, even the church—more than 500 meters inland because of rising seas caused by a warming global climate.[3]

The Lateu islanders' decision to move came after 20 years of struggle in an increasingly arduous natural environment. In the 1980s, their low-lying village was flooded for the first time. By 2005, it was flooding almost every month. The palm trees were exposed to salt water and began to die. The number of yearly storms tripled. The local church finally convinced the villagers to move inland, making the connection between their plight and global climate change.

When the villagers moved at last, they were helped by distant governments, international aid groups, and religious communities. Canada provided critical financial aid to build new village structures on higher ground, while the local church worked to educate the villagers.[4]

In many other places as well, local and international church groups are working alongside international aid groups to help local populations in high-risk regions adapt to the climate crisis.[5] Unfortunately, the misfortune of the people of Lateu will not be the last such incident for impoverished communities, since global warming disproportionately affects the world's poor.

For people of conscience and good will, such an injustice calls for a strong response. Faith leaders and policymakers have increasingly been engaged in addressing the challenge of climate change. By combining our duty to protect the environment with our moral imperative to protect the world's poor from the ravages of global warming, policymakers can craft U.S. environmental policies that will restore our planet and promote the global common good.

Protecting the Neediest Among Us

Leading climate scientists have concluded that the earth is warming and that the human role in that warming is clear. In the United States, we have already seen the beginnings of what the next 50 years may look like: rapidly melting glaciers in Alaska; the expanding habitat of species such as the white pine beetle that are destructive to forests in the western United States; the death of over 30 percent of the coral reef in the Caribbean due to high surface temperatures; some of the hottest temperatures recorded in American cities; and arguably even the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina.[6]

The vicious irony is that the warming of the planet—a problem to which Americans contribute disproportionately by emitting a quarter of the world's carbon emissions while constituting only 5 percent of the world population—will disproportionately affect the world's most needy, who have contributed the least to the problem. According to a report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world's poor will face a series of staggering challenges in the next half-century.

In Africa, climate change may affect hundreds of millions of people, cutting by half the agricultural output in some countries and costing these nations 5 to 10 percent of their annual gross domestic product to adapt to changing climate.[7] In Asia, billions of people could be affected by flooding, especially in countries such as Bangladesh where most of the population is nestled in cities and villages that sit on sweeping river deltas. Rising sea levels in the coming decades may submerge 18 percent of Bangladesh, creating over 30 million refugees.[8]

While such projections show what is likely to come in the next 10 to 50 years, the past few years have already shown how vulnerable these populations are to high-intensity natural disasters. The tsunami of 2004, which killed hundreds of thousands worldwide, often overshadows a series of increasingly frequent and extreme natural disasters that have hit during the last decade. In 1998, for example, Hurricane Mitch killed 13,500 people in Honduras, displaced over 2 million out of a population of 6 million and resulted in damages estimated at $5 billion—equal to 95 percent of Honduras' GDP for that year.[9] That same year, heavy rains and massive flooding in China left more than 3,000 people dead and more than 14 million homeless.[10]

Heavy death tolls and widespread homelessness from more frequent and severe storms, however, are only the most direct manifestation of climate change. In the summer of 2007, heavy rains and flooding in India brought a gloomy assessment from a top U.N. official that if such trends persist, India's farmers may lose up to 18 percent of their collective food production. Similar fears haunt other (mostly poor) countries in the equatorial belt that are subject to fierce annual rainfall.

Given these signs of devastation, we must think and act with a global perspective. Fortunately, we are not working from a blank slate. A growing and diverse international coalition exists today to combat the climate crisis on many fronts. The coalition includes environmentalists, scientists, growing numbers of business leaders, religious communities, the international development community and, as the recent Live Earth concerts highlighted, young people. Coalition participants know they face a monumental task: convincing policymakers in countries with high greenhouse gas emissions, such as the United States, to make the significant reduction of these emissions necessary to avoid the catastrophic effects of uninhibited warming, while also preparing the developing world to adapt to the effects of warming that are inevitably coming.

The Importance of the Faith Community in Meeting This Challenge

Effective response to the climate crisis begins with two requirements. First, we must engage the discussion in moral terms, rather than limiting it to a cost-benefit framework that defines much of public policy analysis. A moral discussion includes universal convictions that can inspire and connect us, such as reverence for life and belief in the dignity of all people, no matter where they live. Second, our moral commitment must be global, for it is only by broadening our concern beyond family and neighbor to encompass all who dwell on the planet that we can ensure that our actions will benefit the least powerful among us.

Because of their work for environmental protection and on behalf of the world's poor through advocacy and relief, faith communities have a unique contribution to make in meeting this crisis. According to Gary Gardner, the Director of Research at Worldwatch Institute, faith communities can bring impressive resources to bear in advocacy and action, for they are deeply embedded in virtually every society. Faith communities own land, provide gathering places for people of common belief, finance billions of dollars of social services locally and abroad, and perhaps most importantly, inspire their followers to act.

In the United States alone, about 28 percent of all volunteerism is sponsored by religious institutions.[11] Clearly, the response of faith communities to the climate crisis is a key component of effective action. In addition to providing such resources, the participation of faith communities is important because they call us to serve others, to sacrifice for goals greater than our own enrichment, and to care for the impoverished among us.

For much of the 20th century, however, environmentalism was largely a secular movement. Though communities of faith engaged in piecemeal environmental efforts, such as land use, agricultural practices, local pollution abatement, and public health, they held no overarching narrative of care for the environment. Indeed, some secular environmentalists looked with skepticism (or worse) at the religious community. In 1967, for example, historian Lynn White laid the blame for environmental destruction in Western countries on the philosophical underpinnings of Judeo-Christian theology, claiming that it instructed humans that their religious duty was to subdue the Earth.[12]

However, in the following decade, things began to change. The United States celebrated its first Earth Day in 1970, amid increasingly visible environmental problems. The decade saw increased

environmental awareness and legislation, including creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, a strengthened Clean Air Act, and new fuel economy standards. Given growing awareness, religious communities and secular environmental groups came together for dialogue and formed partnerships to address environmental problems.

In 1986, the president of the World Wide Fund for Nature International surprised many by commemorating its 25th anniversary with an invitation to leaders of the five major world faiths—Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism—to meet in Italy to discuss interfaith collaboration on environmental issues. The meetings were so successful that they gave birth to the highly acclaimed Alliance of Religions and Conservation, which now conducts projects in over 60 countries and represents 11 religious traditions—comprised of the first five member faiths as well as Baha'i, Daoism, Jainism, Shintoism, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism.

Then, in 1988, the World Council of Churches made history by co-sponsoring a public discussion on climate change with the Greenhouse Crisis Foundation—the first-ever "ecumenical participation in an event on climate change."[13] That was followed by the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize speech of the Dalai Lama, who proposed that Tibet be made into an ecological reserve, sparking a Buddhist environmentalism movement that eventually included even local Buddhist groups in the United States, such as the Green Gulch Zen Center and Zen Mountain Monastery, to begin engaging in local environmental activism.

A year later, Pope John Paul II, having already voiced concern about the degradation of the natural environment, took a dramatic step. In his 1990 World Day of Peace Statement, he declared that stewardship and protection of the environment was a sacred moral duty for all Catholics. The Pope spoke of the "new ecological awareness that was emerging" and of how the "'greenhouse effect' had reached crisis proportions." He urged all Christians to take part in the "vast field of ecumenical and inter-religious cooperation opening up before them."[14]

Another turning point was the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development in 1992, also known as the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. This event clearly linked climate change to the world's poor and "succeeded in obtaining unequivocal, worldwide recognition of one incontrovertible fact—there is only one Earth, it belongs to the rich and the poor, and its protection is the responsibility of all."[15]

If faith-based environmental protection is a fairly recent phenomenon, religious groups providing for and advocating on behalf of the world's poor is a long-established tradition. Today that legacy is embodied by religious relief organizations such as WorldVision, Catholic Relief Services, and the American Jewish World Service, and by secular organizations that work closely with the religious community, such as the American Red Cross and CARE. In addition to relief organizations, groups such as Bread for the World and the ONE Campaign conduct legislative advocacy explicitly geared to combating global poverty.

The list could go on, but the central point is clear enough: Communities of faith are well positioned because of religious principles, institutional presence, and large memberships to work at the intersection of climate change and international poverty. Although these diverse communities of

faith began at different points—from their sacred texts, their long-standing practices and their core beliefs—they arrived at a similar place: a deep respect for the environment, a serious concern about the effects of human-caused environmental degradation on the world's poor, and a belief that it is their duty to act.

For the Abrahamic faiths—Christianity, Islam, and Judaism—part of the theological concern stems from the command to be responsible stewards of God's Creation. Among Eastern traditions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, environmentalism has in part been spurred by a strong compassion toward all life and by a sense of the shared unity and divinity of all living beings. And these five major religions share with other faith traditions an ethos of social justice and concern for the poor. With the potential of climate change to wipe out numerous species, utterly reconfigure the Earth's weather, and devastate the world's poor, communities of faith worldwide have ample reason to be committed to action.

And committed they are. In Islam, several organizations have entered the world's green movement, including the Green Front of Iran, the Environmental Foundation of Turkey, Egypt's Society for Improving the Environment, Pakistan's Sustainable Development Policy Institute, and British Islam's Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Services.

In India, the heartland of Hinduism, the engagement of religious leaders in environmental conservation has begun to show dramatic results. For instance, the work of a single temple resulted in over 2.5 million trees being planted, and local religious efforts worked to mitigate the environmental despoliation of the Yamuna, a tributary to the mighty Ganges and one of Hinduism's holiest rivers.[16]

For many Christians, the Pope's words were a catalyst that spurred the creation of many Christian environmental organizations and efforts. In the United States, the early 1990s saw the creation of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Environmental Justice Program, the Episcopal Church's Environmental Stewardship Team, the National Council of Churches of Christ Office of Environmental and Economic Justice, and others. Despite the general resistance of many in the American evangelical community, the Evangelical Environmental Network was formed, hoping to build support for climate change action within conservative U.S. religious communities.

Similar action began about this time in Jewish religious communities here and abroad (see case study, page 50).

International organizations such as the Alliance of Religions and Conservation worked on a wide range of efforts, from reviving the sacred mountains in Mongolia to helping local sheiks use Islamic teaching in Zanzibar to curb over-fishing. Meanwhile, the World Council of Churches began playing an active role in international efforts on climate change, attending meetings of the Rio Summit, launching petition drives on behalf of the Kyoto Protocol, and coordinating with churches in the Third World to assist the world's poor through the coming crisis. According to some estimates, by 1996, nearly 130,000 local projects linking religion and the environment had started up worldwide.[17]

In the decade since, the coalition of climate-conscious denominations has grown larger and more ambitious. Indeed, in the United States, even previously skeptical evangelical leaders have in the past few years joined the cause, making nationwide headlines with their emphasis on "Creation Care," a biblical call to protect the Earth since it is "the work of our personal and loving Creator" and to protect the "poor who will be hit the hardest."

Collectively, these new alliances and two decades of faith-based environmental activism in the United States have produced notable short-term results, ranging from saving the Endangered Species Act to implementing numerous local conservation projects.

A Case Study of Rapid Activation: Judaism and Global Environmental Justice

As it did for other faiths, the 1980s provided catalyzing events for the Jewish environmental movement. Communities began to connect their faith in the goodness of God's creation with the growing climate crisis, and began to realize that any significant change to our planet would come with disastrous consequences, especially for the world's poor. This tie between creation protection and service to the world's poor has existed since the beginning of Jewish climate advocacy, and continues to this day.

In 1985, the American Jewish World Service formed in Boston and was dedicated to alleviating poverty, hunger, and disease among people across the globe. It quickly became a leader in disaster relief and gained first-hand experience of the effects of natural disasters on vulnerable communities around the world. Whether responding to volcanic eruptions in the Philippines in 1986 or the effects of drought in Niger, AJWS has seen the extremes to which climate change is harming the poor around the world.

Then, in 1988, Ellen Bernstein, sometimes referred to as the "birth mother of the Jewish environmental movement," founded the first national Jewish environmental organization, Shomrei Adamah (Keepers of the Earth). Headquartered in Philadelphia and operating nationwide, Shomrei Adamah developed curricula and educational materials on Judaism and ecology, such as "Let the Earth Teach You Torah."

In the spring of 1992 (at the invitation of Al Gore and Carl Sagan), the leadership of the major organizations in American Jewish life, eminent rabbis, denominational presidents, and Jewish U.S. senators gathered in Washington, D.C. for presentations by distinguished scientists and theologians on the earth's mounting environmental problems. What became clear was the need to act, and for the Jewish community to speak from its religious faith. Within a year, the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, which operates within the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, was founded, declaring unabashedly that "for Jews, the environmental crisis is a religious challenge" and that Jewish communities "cannot accept the escalating destruction of our environment."[18]

COEJL was driven by a clear sense that the Jewish faith—its teachings, its traditions, and its people—could take pragmatic steps in response to the challenge of climate change. Increasingly,

Jewish environmentalists in the United States approached the climate challenge in a more comprehensive way: by focusing on national and local efforts.[19]

On the national level, these leaders realized they had a unique role to play: taking on the formidable challenge of making environmental protection more salient in American politics by speaking of it in a deeply felt moral framework. Their advocacy efforts included working with American Protestant and Catholic leaders who were also becoming increasingly engaged in the climate change debate. As part of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment, for example, Jewish environmentalists lobbied vigorously and successfully alongside the Evangelical Environmental Network in 1995 to save the Endangered Species Act. They framed the issue in explicitly religious terms, stating, "The Endangered Species Act is our Noah's Ark, and Congress and the special interests are trying to sink it."

In the Kyoto debate in 1997, Jewish environmentalists were once again part of a broader religious effort. When the 210th General Assembly of the U.S. Presbyterian Church passed a dramatic resolution calling for a full ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by the U.S. Senate, Jewish groups such as COEJL worked to build grassroots support.

And in 2000, COEJL worked alongside other faith groups to launch the Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign, a state-by-state effort to build political momentum concerning climate change. These state-level campaigns yielded unexpectedly effective results, such as the coal-producing state of Pennsylvania passing a first-ever renewable-portfolio mandate on its utilities.

Collectively, these groups were also able to speak with a loud voice. In 2001 they sent President Bush a letter on energy policy, "Let There Be Light," which was signed by over 1,200 religious leaders from all 50 states. The leaders represented Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, and Jewish faiths, and included 600 rabbis, who together served more than 45 million Americans. They called for an ambitious and much-needed legislative agenda, including stricter fuel efficiency, investments in renewable energy, regulating carbon emissions from power plants, and greater mass transit.

When the Bush administration considered a proposal to increase fuel efficiency standards for SUVs and light trucks in 2002, Jewish groups stood alongside the Evangelical Environmental Network as it held a series of high-publicity events highlighting the moral dimension of car ownership and car use with its "What Would Jesus Drive?" campaign. Separately, COEJL launched a "Driven by Values" letter-writing campaign to top automobile executives, demanding more fuel-efficient cars and chiding, "Auto companies are about values, not just vehicles."

In addition to the national level, Jewish efforts included a strong interfaith component on the local level, with a primary focus on building awareness of environmental issues in their own congregations. By the late 1990s, religious groups were realizing that educating their own followers was essential to a broader mindset change. As a result, the National Religious Partnership on the Environment, of which COEJL is a member, developed a series of denomination-specific educational resources. Outreach to local religious communities

continues to flourish through a variety of activities, such as training conferences, summer camps, workshops and retreats, coordination with religious colleges, scholarships and fellowships to local religious leaders, and more.

The second arena of local action in which Jewish faith communities played an active role has been, by many accounts, the most effective: the "greening" of places of worship in terms of their construction and daily practices. One of the most successful organizations in this regard has been Interfaith Power and Light, which many synagogues belong to and which now has 23 members in various states representing over 30 religious denominations. In what began as a pilot program in California—to allow a group of Episcopal churches to purchase energy from a green supplier instead of the utility companies—IPL has grown into an increasingly ambitious and effective nationwide interfaith program.

Efforts now exist to make communities of faith more environmentally responsible in numerous ways. With a little bit of humor, COEJL launched a "How Many Jews Does it Take to Change a Light Bulb?" campaign in 2006 to promote high-efficiency light bulbs. Some synagogues have signed on with the EPA's "EnergyStar for Congregations" program to reduce their consumption of energy. A number of synagogues have participated in "green congregations" programs, both independently and through groups such as IPL, COEJL, and GreenFaith.

Some synagogues are even seeking LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification standards set by the U.S. Green Building Council. Such efforts also have a multiplier effect, encouraging individual responsibility and educating congregants as to what steps they can take, and fostering increased interest in advocacy on the subject.

The third area of action has been within the corporate boardroom, with numerous faith-based groups, including Jewish organizations such as the Jewish Funds for Justice and the Jewish Shareholder Engagement Network, acting as environmentally conscious investors. The center of these efforts in the United States has been the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility, which focuses on shareholder advocacy and investment screening. Begun in 1971, ICCR now has over 275 Jewish, Protestant, and Catholic institutional investors, as well as others—and assets totaling over $110 billion.

Since 1991, ICCR has made climate change one of its core issues and has targeted automotive, electrical power, oil, and gas companies, demanding through shareholder resolutions and meetings with management that they adopt an explicit carbon reduction goal, publicly report their carbon "footprint," and publicly support U.S. governmental action on mandatory carbon limits.

Though ICCR's values-based shareholder resolutions rarely pass, the organization has begun to attract media attention and allies. Furthermore, ICCR's seal-of-approval is increasingly being sought by corporate management. Indeed, the power of socially conscious investing as a means of addressing environmental concerns is finding a global audience, with the creation of the International Interfaith Investment Group in 2005, in which Jewish organizations such as the U.K.-based Liberal Judaism and the World Union for Progressive Judaism participate, and which invests globally in companies that are working to help mitigate climate change.

Looking Ahead: New Opportunities Amid a Growing Crisis
What's Happening Inside Faith Communities

Over the past 20 years, communities of faith have achieved significant victories in their advocacy and action. But much more needs to be done. Since 1990, yearly worldwide carbon dioxide emissions have increased by more than 25 percent.[20] From 1990 to 2004, Florida alone experienced a 79 percent increase in carbon emissions.[21] Despite this, government-regulated automobile fuel economy standards have not been increased in the United States since 1985.[22]

There is reason for hope, however, and for a renewed dedication to act. Climate scientists say that we already have the technological and administrative know-how to reduce carbon emissions sufficiently to slow down rising global temperatures.[23] But reaching the critical goal—an 80 percent reduction below 1990 levels of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States by 2050—will require dramatic steps.

How can communities of faith help our nation reach that goal? First of all, they need to continue educating their congregations about climate change. A 2006 Pew poll found that 88 percent of secular Americans believe the Earth is warming, but when religious believers are included, that number drops to 79 percent—and to 70 percent among white evangelicals. Moreover, a much-too-low 62 percent of Americans are aware of the key fact—that warming is a result of human activity—but that number drops to 50 percent when communities of faith are singled out.[24]

In addition to building awareness, increased participation by congregations in low-carbon emissions practices is extremely valuable and has great potential. Even with its rapid recent growth, an organization such as Interfaith Power and Light exists in only 22 states and the District of Columbia. According to EPA estimates, there are over 300,000 places of worship in the United States, and a congregation serious about reducing its energy use can do so by as much as 30 percent. Even a 10 percent, across-the-board reduction in energy use by America's places of worship would have a dramatic effect: saving them $200 million in energy costs and reducing U.S. carbon emissions by over 2 million tons.[25]

Above all, faith leaders must continue to draw the clear link between climate change and protecting the world's poor. This ethical impulse to provide for the needy and protect the vulnerable is among America's most potent shared moral values, and its human face has tremendous power, especially in reaching religious believers who already have a strong commitment to caring for the least fortunate among us.

For Richard Cizik, the National Association of Evangelicals' vice president of government affairs and a leader in other areas (such as the crisis in Darfur), learning of the dramatic effects of future warming on the poor was a wake-up call "not unlike my conversion to Christ."[26] When faith communities highlight the impact of climate change on the poor, more such wake-up calls will occur.

Indeed, it is telling that the Interfaith Stewardship Alliance, a group of conservative evangelicals who dispute the reality of climate change and argue against evangelical involvement in the matter,

makes the audaciously false claim that protecting the environment would, in fact, harm the world's poor. These opponents of "creation care" understand full well that making the moral connection between environmental protection and aiding the world's poor is crucial to expanding support among evangelical communities for international environmental action.

Shaping the Federal Response

The climate change challenge is not for the faith community to carry alone. As religious leaders encourage responsibility within their communities, public officials and policy makers must also display leadership by crafting effective legislation that reflects our ethical obligation to the global common good. Faith communities must urge their representatives to advance these issues, using their vote to voice their concerns. The crisis of climate change can be remedied only by connecting personal responsibility and moral principles with smart governmental policy.

One particular goal deserves attention: reductions in U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. Such a reduction is essential to prevent temperature increases that would result in dangerous climate change and its consequences, such as dramatic sea-level rise and the extinction of many species. Individual action in our homes, in our places of work, and in our houses of worship is not enough. The federal government must also fulfill its responsibility to the global common good.

Fortunately, bold calls for action are coming from unexpected quarters. After the past few years of increasing evangelical dialogue on climate change, headlines were made in 2006 when 86 prominent evangelical leaders launched the "Evangelical Climate Initiative"—a public statement that called for federal action to address the challenge of climate change. In 2007, these leaders went further, issuing "Principles for Federal Policy" that laid out an explicit legislative agenda to reach that 80 percent reduction target by 2050.

The ECI's policy proposals call for a carbon cap-and-trade system in which the government would mandate a nationwide cap on greenhouse gas emissions and then allow companies to trade emission credits in the marketplace. The ECI also endorses efforts to reduce our dependence on foreign oil through more efficient automobile fuel economy standards, more conservation, more investments in renewable energy, and federal legislation to assist the poor here and abroad to cope with the effects of climate change.

Despite ECI being a relatively recent entrant into the climate debate, it has issued one of the clearest and boldest calls by a religious group for federal action. Similarly, the National Council of Churches has embraced as a national priority an 80 percent reduction of greenhouse gases by 2050. This goal will require legislation that enables the swift adoption of clear policymaking priorities, beginning with a cap-and-trade system.

When businesses are obligated to factor the costs of greenhouse gas emissions into their bottom lines, market forces will begin to steer them toward greater efficiency, cleaner fuels, and cleaner ways to burn fossil fuels. A trading system provides independence and flexibility for industries and businesses, allowing them to seek out the most efficient reductions across the economy.

The program could additionally link U.S. industries and capital markets with international cap-and-trade programs already in existence, so that they could coordinate policies and help forge a multinational, unified front against global warming.[27]

In addition to mandatory carbon emissions caps, the United States must enact a full overhaul of our federal energy laws, thereby increasing our sources of renewable energy and promoting the clean use of fossil fuels. The following steps would be a solid start to this work:

- Improving vehicle fuel efficiency standards so that so-called corporate average fuel economy, or CAFE, standards ensure that U.S. manufactured cars, light trucks, and SUVs get a minimum of 40 miles per gallon by 2025.

- Increasing the availability of low-carbon alternative fuels, such as biofuels, so that 25 percent of transportation fuels are low-carbon alternatives by 2025.

- Increasing renewable energy generation so that 25 percent of U.S. electricity production comes from renewable energy resources by 2025.

- Increasing investments and loan guarantees for smart-grid infrastructure to improve efficiency and electricity distribution nationwide.

- Doubling federal research and development funding for renewable and low-carbon energy technologies.

- Encouraging the promotion and development of energy efficient buildings and appliances.

Acting Beyond Our National Borders

The front lines of climate change are found in the most impoverished communities, requiring U.S. government action beyond our borders. Many faith communities have been urging such action. For the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, "the primary concern in the current public debate [on global warming] is the needs of poor people and developing nations to be addressed." The conference has called for the U.S. government to take a series of actions, including increased foreign aid to developing nations to assist in sustainable development and technological assistance to help them develop more benign energy production options.[28]

In congressional testimony during the summer of 2007 on the "views of religious organizations regarding global warming," representatives of diverse faith communities—the National Council of Churches, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Evangelical Climate Initiative, and the Religious Action Center for Reform Judaism—all focused a significant portion of their remarks on the plight of the world's poor and the need for the U.S. government to aid developing nations in adapting to the climate crisis.

Nor have faith groups stopped at public statements; they are also addressing the challenge of the global poor through direct action. The World Council of Churches has worked to coordinate

with relief agencies such as the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and denominations such as the Methodists have taken steps to reorient their foreign missions to incorporate sustainable practices and conservation related to global warming.

Still, leadership by the U.S. government on a global scale is essential—both in international climate negotiations and in supporting the global poor as they face escalating environmental, health, and economic crises associated with climate change. The U.S. refusal to sign the Kyoto Protocol in 2001 has been regrettable because the Kyoto accords are today the only international framework for countries to cooperate, share information, and develop national policies to address global greenhouse gas emissions.

But it is not too late for the United States to become an active participant in global climate change negotiations. Though the terms of the treaty are set to expire in 2012, Kyoto represents the platform through which the next global climate agreement will be determined. Discussions are already underway—unfortunately, without the responsible leadership of the United States—as to what a post-2012 treaty will look like.

How will an international agreement to reduce emissions preserve economic competitiveness? How will it incorporate the participation of developing countries, such as China and India, which are quickly becoming the planet's largest source of emissions? How can we help least-developed countries leapfrog the dirty technologies that are holding our country hostage today? These are issues in which the United States has an enormous stake, and it is to the detriment of our national interests and the global common good that we stand by as the rest of the world seeks answers to these difficult questions.

Likewise, the United States has the responsibility to consider in its foreign aid policies the effects of climate change on the world's most vulnerable communities. No matter how accurate the scientific modeling techniques that forecast changes in precipitation and temperature, without economic strength and institutional capacity, the global poor will have few means of adapting to the predicted changes. And without urgent international action, hundreds of millions will be affected in the coming decades as crop yields drop, ecosystems collapse, and communities' critical infrastructures are threatened by rising sea levels and greater heat waves, droughts, flooding, wildfires, and more intense storms.

Indeed, even moderate climate change scenarios have the potential to exacerbate already endemic poverty in much of the developing world, undermining efforts to build capable economies, stable governments, and health care systems. Developing countries will need to adapt their water systems and agricultural techniques, reduce vulnerability to extreme weather events, develop new policy planning and early-warning systems, cope with heightened disease vectors, and address increased migration and conflict. These challenges will be enormous and will entail high costs.

The World Bank and others have released estimates that adapting to climate change in developing countries will cost anywhere from $10 billion to $50 billion annually. Whatever the exact number, it is clear that current levels of development assistance from the industrialized world are woefully insufficient. Currently there are three climate change adaptation funds established under the

U.N. framework, but a mere $182 million has been committed—an inconsequential amount compared to what is needed.

So great is the threat to global poverty and international development that it calls for a comprehensive overhaul of the U.S. government's international development policy. Four major steps will make real progress in meeting our moral obligation to secure the common good.

First, given the direct link between poverty and climate change, the U.S. government must put a high priority on climate change in its foreign assistance policies so that adaptation (our responses to the consequences of climate change) and mitigation (our action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by embracing clean energy, energy efficiency, and new technologies)—become part and parcel of the missions of U.S. agencies involved in international development activities.

Second, the United States should undertake a climate-risk assessment of its current development activities. Because the United States does not take into account the projected costs of climate change on projects, such as maintenance and operations over a project's lifetime, taking this step would immediately raise the efficacy of U.S. aid dollars and programs. Such an assessment would serve to guide the integration of climate policy into future planning and help the world's poor meet escalating development challenges due to climate change.

Third, the United States should establish a climate change adaptation fund budgeted with additional money over and above what is already dedicated to development assistance. In funding everything from drought-resistant seeds to new water management technology, additional investment and technical assistance in these and other arenas will be crucial. An international adaptation fund may require the creation of a new program not unlike the international Millennium Challenge Corporation, a relatively new U.S. development agency that specializes in promoting economic development, to deliver and coordinate efforts.

Fourth, once the United States adopts a cap-and-trade system to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, a percentage of the revenue generated through the auction of emission permits should be dedicated to the international adaptation fund. We must take responsibility for our contribution to this crisis by contributing our fair share to its solution. In addition, the United States should devote half of the revenue from cap-and-trade auctions to low- and moderate-income Americans to offset any energy price increases they may experience during the transition from carbon-intensive energy to low-carbon alternative sources.

Finally, the United States must ensure that we will be able to adapt to global warming and that our government investments and infrastructure will be able to withstand projected changes in our climate such as increased incidence of more intense hurricanes, drought, flooding, and wildfires. Even if all nations stopped their global warming emissions today, the concentration of greenhouse gases currently in the atmosphere is high enough that we are already experiencing the effects of global warming and will continue to do so for years to come.

The federal government must lead by example and encourage businesses and state and local governments to also minimize their emissions, as well as plan for the projected effects of

climate change. Cumulatively, these steps will go far in finally bringing U.S. international development policy in line with the most significant challenge the developing world is likely to face in the next 50 years.

Don't Wait for the World to Change

There is a traditional Jewish story that rabbis like to tell. A man is busy planting a tree when a neighbor rushes up to announce that the Messiah has come and the end of the world is here. What does the religious man do? He finishes planting the tree, and then he goes to see whether the news is true. The Islamic tradition has a similar story, where a man is carrying a palm cutting when the Day of Judgment takes place. The religious man, it is counseled, should not forget to plant the cutting.[29]

The object lesson of both tales is that we all have a responsibility to creation that is not to be neglected. Today we are faced with an incredible opportunity, and a deep moral responsibility, to save the world as we know it—to save numerous species from extinction, to save hundreds of millions of people from suffering, and to save our precious planet so that future generations may inhabit it. We have the tools to act, the time to succeed, and a vibrant and growing coalition that speaks of the climate challenge in a strong moral voice. Together, we must reach beyond our individual lives and national boundaries to act on behalf of our distant neighbors with whom we share the planet. Our futures are linked.

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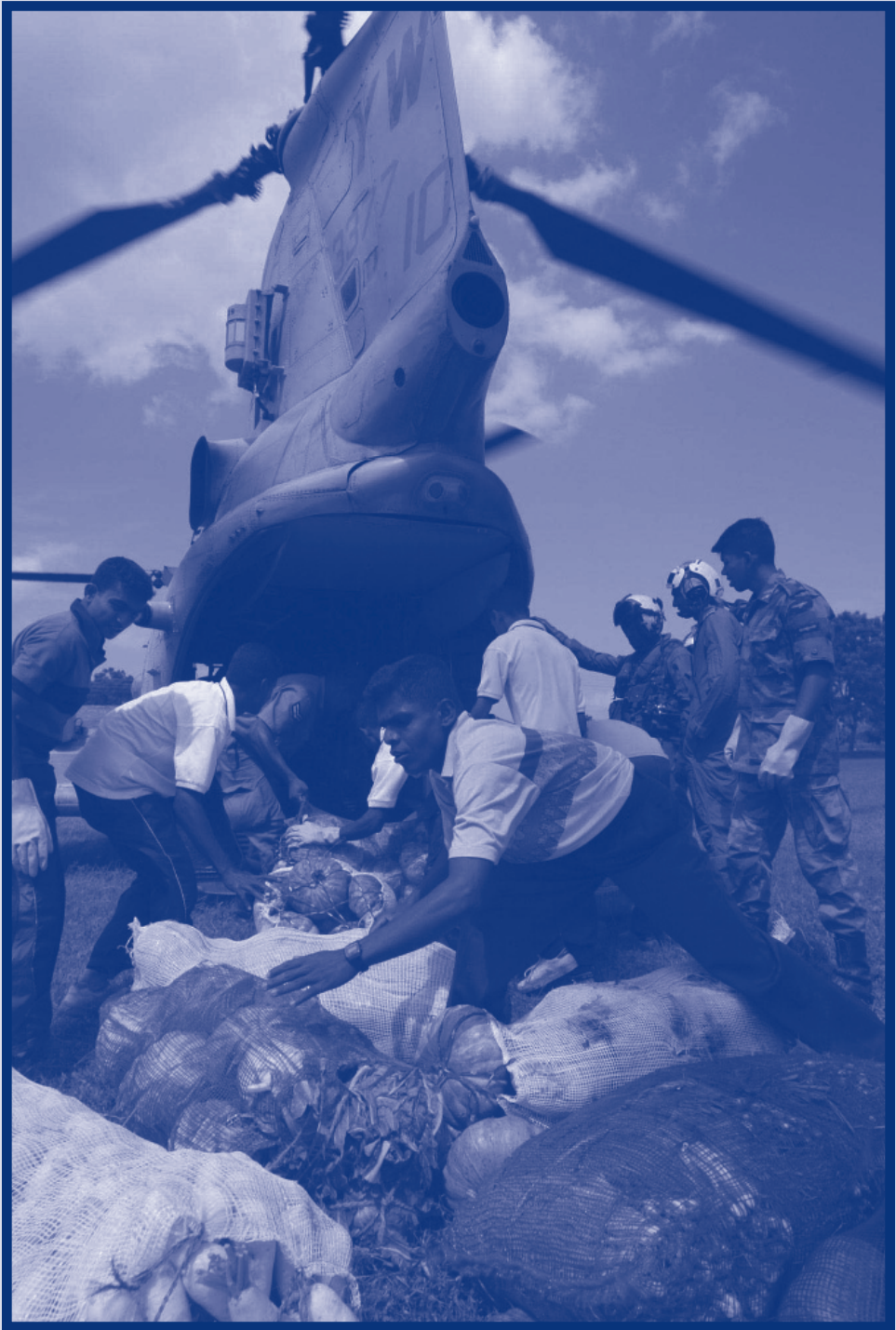
The Essential Humanity of Foreign Aid
A Pragmatic Case for the Global Common Good

Denis McDonough and Andrew Tillman

Justifications for foreign aid and international development programs in the United States are often wrapped in the realist language of national interest—defined as encompassing political, military, and economic advantages for the United States. Former President Reagan once wrote that "U.S. foreign assistance, including a balanced mix of military and economic assistance, promotes important national interests and helps communicate our values and principles throughout the world."[1] Echoing this sentiment, former Secretary of State Colin Powell claimed that "a well-administered Agency for International Development is an indispensable tool for advancing America's interests and values in this world, an indispensable tool for furthering our country's foreign policy objectives."[2] Although both President Reagan and Secretary Powell say that U.S. foreign assistance programs demonstrate our values,[3] that argument is clearly secondary (in their speeches and in the programs they both oversaw) to the utility of foreign assistance to our national security.

It is undeniably true that investing in the well-being of people abroad protects our security at home. And since 9/11, we are increasingly aware that weak and failing states unable to provide for the most basic needs of their population can become breeding grounds for extremism and recruiting grounds for terrorist organizations.[4] Unfortunately, it is a widely held conviction that appealing to this argument is the only way to get Congress to increase the percentage of our nation's gross national product dedicated to foreign assistance and that appealing to our nation's enlightened, altruistic interest in helping the world's poor would be politically futile.[5]

The national self-interest argument appeals to members of Congress who have been deeply skeptical about the value of sending U.S. taxpayer dollars overseas, which helps explain these appeals. Yet the realist school of thought underestimates the central role that generosity and virtue have played in the creation and construction of U.S. foreign assistance. It also underestimates the degree to which increased foreign assistance resonates with American religious and ethical beliefs that we are united as human, and, as such, are obliged to provide for those in need not only in our communities but around the world.

When we invest our treasure to combat human suffering for the simple reason that we believe in the dignity of individuals, regardless of their location or impact on our own standing, we reap a commensurate benefit that includes increased security. Rather than making our nation's values a secondary argument in support of foreign assistance, we should give moral obligations greater weight. Such a balance is essential to the long-term success of foreign assistance programs. Only by embracing our traditional beliefs in helping others—exemplified most recently by our country's assistance to Indonesia after its devastating earthquake and tsunami—

will policymakers be able to deploy foreign assistance programs that live up to America's moral responsibilities to combat poverty, fight injustice, and alleviate global suffering, and fulfil America's domestic responsibility to increase U.S. security.

What's more, foreign assistance programs predicated on the global common good will reestablish our nation's lost global moral authority—an objective that is clearly in the common interest of humanity.

The State of the Global Common Good and International Development

Our planet knows unparalleled wealth—and unbelievable suffering. Nearly half the world's population—close to 2.8 billion people—live on less than $2 a day; 854 million are undernourished; nearly 40 million live with AIDS; and 3.5 billion (54 percent of the world's population) live in countries that are not free or only partly free.[6]

Income inequality is also increasing at an alarming rate. And newer challenges such as global warming will harm the poorest first, even though they are not primarily responsible for causing the pollution that contributes to climate change. Despite international initiatives to confront poverty—including the United Nations' quest to cut global poverty in half and increase economic prosperity, improve education and gender equality, and provide accessible health care for all by 2015—action by the international community has been slow.

In fact, *The Economist* recently concluded that "the U.N.'s drive against poverty remains half crusade and half charade."[7] To date, the nominal decline in global poverty is mostly due to rapid economic growth in East and Southeast Asia, India, and Eastern Europe. In West Asia, however, poverty rates more than doubled between 1990 and 2005, while among the nations that once constituted the former Soviet Union (the so-called Commonwealth of Independent States)[8] and Southeastern Europe,[9] poverty has not appreciably changed.

Similarly, gender inequality remains staggering. Women do a disproportionate amount of the work worldwide, but are paid far less. And perhaps most disturbingly, most of the half-million women who died during pregnancy or childbirth in 2005 could have been saved with proper care and medicine—as could more than 10 million children who died before age five.[10]

In the face of such disheartening statistics, the governments of the developed world—led by the United States—should be providing more generous foreign assistance. However, foreign assistance is decreasing after accounting for inflation. Official aid in real terms dropped by 5.1 percent in 2006 and is expected to drop slightly more in 2007. Furthermore, few countries (with the exception of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands) give the 0.7 percent of GNP to foreign aid that the United Nations has been calling for since 1970.[11]

The United States gave only 0.17 percent of GNP to foreign assistance in 2005, which places us near the bottom among industrialized countries. It is true that in gross terms such a sum places the United States as the highest giver, but think of what could be achieved if the most affluent nation in the world matched other countries in its share of foreign aid.[12]

A History of Values and Foreign Assistance

In the past, the United States has been more generous in its giving, and to great effect. Indeed, the most successful foreign assistance initiatives in our history have been motivated not just by national interest but also by a dedication to the global common good. By contrast, when U.S. foreign policymakers neglected moral considerations by funding undemocratic governments or tolerating corruption because they seemed in our security interests, our long-term national interests have been damaged.

The most successful foreign assistance plan in our country's history is arguably the reconstruction plan developed by President Harry Truman and Secretary of State George Marshall after the devastation and destruction of World War II. Known as the Marshall Plan, it is an exceptional example of how national interest combined with values can advance the global common good.

Between 1948 and 1952, the Marshall Plan provided Europeans with $13 billion in aid—about $85 billion in today's dollars. A central rationale for this assistance was grounded in the national interest. Business leaders and state officials (including then-state department official Paul Nitze) worried that the United States could face a serious depression if the virtually bankrupt Europeans did not receive substantial loans to buy American exports.[13] U.S. officials also wanted the Marshall Plan to strengthen European alliances and contain Soviet communism.

But altruism was also a crucial motivation for the plan. Marshall explained:

> Europe's requirements for the next three or four years of foreign food and other essential products—principally from America—are so much greater than her present ability to pay that she must have substantial additional help, or face economic, social, and political deterioration of a very grave character.[14]

Despite grave concerns about communism infiltrating Europe, the United States directed its aid toward key industrial countries that could spark Europe's recovery, rather than to those nations with the largest communist parties.[15] This sense of obligation complemented considerations of national interest and formulated a plan that helped Western Europe rebuild and thrive.

Twenty years later, President John F. Kennedy sought to copy Truman's success with his foreign assistance projects, but had mixed results. Building upon the Marshall Plan, he institutionalized U.S. foreign aid with the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the establishment of the United States Agency for International Development. In addition, his administration created the Peace Corps, which was Kennedy's most enduring achievement in foreign assistance and a hugely successful program that continues today.

The young president's intention to reorganize and strengthen foreign assistance was clearly a mix of moral obligation and national interest. Regarding moral obligation, Kennedy told Congress in 1961:

> There is no escaping our obligations: our moral obligations as a wise leader
> and good neighbor in the interdependent community of free nations—our
> economic obligations as the wealthiest people in a world of largely poor
> people, as a nation no longer dependent upon the loans from abroad that
> once helped us develop our own economy—and our political obligations as
> the single largest counter to the adversaries of freedom.[16]

Later in the speech, Kennedy spoke of the national interest:

> To fail to meet those obligations now would be disastrous; and, in the long
> run, more expensive. Widespread poverty and chaos would lead to a collapse
> of existing political and social structures which would inevitably invite the
> advance of totalitarianism into every weak and unstable area. Thus our own
> security would be endangered and our prosperity imperiled. A program
> of assistance to the underdeveloped nations must continue because the
> nation's interest and the cause of political freedom require it.[17]

While there is no reason to doubt Kennedy's sincerity, in practice his foreign assistance
programs did not always maintain their moral vision, particularly when bolstering friendly
governments (regardless of their governance practices) to check Soviet expansionism. Case
in point: Kennedy's 1961 Alliance for Progress was on the surface designed to encourage
economic development, social justice, and political democracy, but was in practice motivated
by U.S. geopolitical concerns that stemmed from the Cuban Revolution of 1959.[18]

Furthermore, Kennedy's economic assistance programs did not discriminate between
authoritarian and democratic regimes. Propping up anti-communist military dictatorships
in Latin America in the 1960s outweighed moral obligations and support for political
democracy—a legacy that still haunts us throughout the region. Even though most Latin
American countries are democracies today, anti-Americanism still runs strong due to the
foreign aid programs that favored dictatorships over human development.

During the presidency of Jimmy Carter, foreign assistance motivated by national interest
considerations and human rights concerns did lead to a great success. Under the Camp David
Accords of 1979, an agreement resulted in Egypt recognizing Israel and Israel returning the
Sinai Desert to Egypt. U.S. foreign assistance—$3 billion annually to Israel and $1.3 billion
annually to Egypt—was the glue that made that geo-political deal stick. Such aid packages,
when balanced with military and non-military assistance, can play a crucial role in securing
agreements like those reached at Camp David.

George W. Bush, perhaps more so than any other president in the modern era, has stressed
America's moral obligation to reduce suffering throughout the world. At the Inter-American
Development Bank in 2002, the president announced his "New Compact for Development,"
a plan to increase core development assistance by 50 percent over the next three years. When
unveiling his new plan, he said:

> The advance of development is a central commitment of American foreign
> policy. As a nation founded on the dignity and value of every life, America's
> heart breaks because of the suffering and senseless death we see in our world.
> We work for prosperity and opportunity because they're right. It's the right
> thing to do.[19]

Throughout his presidency, Bush has continued to prioritize these American values as the basis of
U.S. foreign assistance, recognizing the contribution that smart foreign assistance programs make
to our security and national interest. As former Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Steven
Radelet argues, the Bush administration's posture on foreign assistance reflects an "acceptance of
the fact that poverty and inequality around the world generate hostility and resentment toward
the United States and thereby weaken national security."[20]

This embrace of values in support of foreign assistance reflects the president's open religious
beliefs, but also a recognition that evangelical Christians, who are an important part of the
president's political base,[21] strongly support increased foreign assistance because they believe that
"to whom much is given, much is required."[22]

In fact, the influence of this one constituency on U.S. foreign policy generally and foreign
assistance in particular has been a substantial, and perhaps decisive, feature driving increased
investments in foreign assistance during the mid 1990s. One of the most dramatic examples of
this influence is President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, known as PEPFAR, which
aims to combat global HIV/AIDS by providing life-saving antiretroviral drugs and care to
patients as well as preventing new infections.

The influential constituency of evangelical Christians who believe that morally based foreign
assistance is just as important, or perhaps more important, than assistance based only on national
interests demonstrates the administration's success in accentuating such values. Yet PEPFAR may
also be an example of why foreign aid programs that appeal to particular partisan groups can
backfire—at home and abroad.

Common Good Must Be Common

The story of values-based provisions in PEPFAR underscores a cautionary note about the global
common good—that the values promoted must indeed be common, or shared. The legislation
authorizing PEPFAR contains two controversial provisions that fail to meet this test.

One provision requires that one-third of all money spent on preventing the transmission of
HIV be spent on programs that promote only abstinence, which development and health
experts consider an ineffective strategy. Another prohibits prevention money from being spent
on programs involving sex workers unless funding recipients sign a pledge not to promote
the legalization or practice of prostitution. Development and health experts also consider this
prohibition counterproductive because it creates a barrier to providing services to sex workers,
who are already at a disproportionately high risk of contracting or transmitting HIV in many
countries with high rates of HIV infection.

These two provisions may reflect the particular concerns of certain narrow segments of the American Christian community, but they do not reflect more broad-based concerns about addressing the disease and its suffering that prompt the need for assistance in the first place. Such narrow concerns contrast with programs such as the Peace Corps, which are based on a widespread belief in our common humanity, along with appeals to our national self-interest. Programs like the Peace Corps are more durable than PEPFAR and have broader appeal. By calling on the values that unite Americans, such programs embrace our nation's diversity and demonstrate that we value the global community.

There is another sense in which the common good must remain common: Policy makers must design assistance programs to meet shared responsibilities, not enrich a few particular interests. While the Bush administration has ensured dramatic increases in funding for the fight against HIV, it has also overseen the unsupervised, haphazard, and sometimes corrupt expenditure of billions of dollars in foreign assistance through no-bid contracts in Iraq. No-bid contracts were awarded in part because of a perceived need to move quickly to stabilize the immediate situation in Iraq—and in part to reward political allies at home. But focusing on such short-term benefits instead of broader, more long-term goals ends up being neither strategically smart nor ethically right.

Besides the billions of dollars wasted in failed development projects, such projects lead to the perception at home and abroad that taxpayer dollars have been funneled to dubious foreign aid programs. Foreign assistance programs in Iraq undoubtedly would have had a more beneficial influence on the image of our country abroad if not for charges of corruption, cronyism, and calculated short-term political considerations.

Foreign assistance programs that stress shared values allow policymakers to muster the political will necessary for long-term success. Any U.S. foreign assistance program designed to counter perceived threats abroad or appease one particular interest group at home has insufficient staying power. Threats are so dynamic and political calculations so short-lived that it is extremely difficult to sustain public support over the course of many decades—the kind of sustained time horizon that is necessary to see enduring effects from foreign assistance programs—without having to compete with new threats.

Balancing National Interest with the Common Good

Of course, balancing considerations of national interest equally with promotion of the global common good is easier said than done. It would be difficult for any American administration to cut off relations with a regime that provides valuable counterterrorism intelligence, even if it is a despicable and undemocratic regime. Two recent case studies—one negative and one positive—underscore this point.

U.S. foreign assistance to Colombia clearly demonstrates the negative consequences of not balancing the national interest with the values of the global common good. In 1998, former Colombian president Andres Pastrana worked with the Clinton administration to develop Plan Colombia, a foreign assistance program designed to combat drug production and trafficking and promote economic and social development, while simultaneously increasing the Colombian government's control of parts of the country that had been ignored for decades.

Support for the plan continued through the Bush administration. As Roger F. Noriega, former assistant secretary for western hemisphere affairs, explained to the House International Relations Committee, "U.S. policy toward Colombia supports the Colombian government's efforts to defend and strengthen its democratic institutions, promote respect for human rights and the rule of law, intensify counter-narcotics efforts, foster socio-economic development, and address immediate humanitarian needs."[23]

In reality, however, our focus in Colombia has been much narrower. The majority of American foreign assistance is funneled directly into counter-narcotics programs. As of September 2006, 75 to 80 percent of U.S. aid has gone to the Colombian security forces.[24] This assistance has produced limited positive results, such as some abatement of armed conflict, the enhancement of nationwide security, and the capture of more drug shipments and traffickers.

Nevertheless, many experts have also concluded that focusing our investments on military institutions alone—as has been the case through the past two administrations—has been insufficient to lessen Colombia's socioeconomic and political problems.[25] Colombia's ambassador to the United States, Carolina Barco, has been lobbying Washington on exactly this point. She has said that "not only military action but also social and economic investment" are needed to ensure security gains.[26] "Rebuilding Colombia's economy goes hand-in-hand with providing security. Guerrilla organizations and drug traffickers have flourished in those very regions of the country where poverty and underdevelopment exist," she explains. "To successfully defeat drugs, we must address poverty."[27]

This message corresponds with Bush's rhetoric on the connection between poverty and security. But the administration's emphasis on drug eradication and interdiction, as well as the training of Colombian military forces to combat drugs and terrorism, has negated the connection in Colombia. As a result, our aid program (along with others based primarily on security considerations) seems misplaced and limited to the people who are supposed to benefit from it. Meanwhile, the relative failure of the United States to stem the illegal import of illicit drugs from Colombia only increases domestic skepticism about U.S. foreign assistance.

In contrast, the U.S. humanitarian relief provided to countries struck by the devastating 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami highlights the positive effects of foreign and humanitarian assistance when they are guided by principles of the global common good. Although the Bush administration was inexplicably silent in the first days after the tsunami struck, shortly thereafter the president made it clear that our nation's desire to help the victims stemmed from an understanding of their suffering and an American tradition of philanthropy:

> From our own experiences, we know that nothing can take away the grief of those affected by tragedy. We also know that Americans have a history of rising to meet great humanitarian challenges and of providing hope to suffering peoples. As men and women across the devastated region begin to rebuild, we offer our sustained compassion and our generosity, and our assurance that America will be there to help.[28]

Former President Clinton, who along with former President Bush helped raise private funds for tsunami relief, also championed "the idea that we have a moral obligation to build these areas back better than they were before the crisis began."[29]

Indeed, the United States was the first to arrive on the scene and led the humanitarian effort in South and Southeast Asia. Just days after the tsunami, aircraft and ships from the Defense Department were transporting wounded victims and providing supplies, food, and fresh water.[30] USAID quickly helped fund cleanup and reconstruction projects and provided food and water. Working with a $656 million tsunami recovery and reconstruction fund, USAID remains in the region today and continues to help rebuild schools and hospitals and hold workshops and drills on disaster preparedness.[31]

> "The United States contributes to the global common good when helping others, and our nation's image abroad is enhanced in the process. By building foreign assistance programs that stress shared values, policymakers can muster the political will necessary for long-term success."

These efforts led not only to more rapid recovery in the region, but also to an improved image of America abroad. Indonesians were especially grateful, according to a Pew Global Attitudes Project poll. In fact, 79 percent of Indonesians had a more favorable opinion of America because of its relief efforts after the tsunami. The overall percentage of Indonesians with a favorable opinion of the United States increased from 15 percent in 2003 to 38 percent in 2005,[32] even as U.S. military action in Iraq continued to draw widespread negative press coverage across the Islamic world.

Of course, it would be naïve to think that national interest did not play a part in the tsunami relief plan. American leaders were certainly aware that massive assistance and humanitarian operations would demonstrate what the United States could do and what other countries could not do. Officials were also aware that relief efforts would provide positive images of American soldiers aiding the needy, in contrast to negative images of the war in Iraq.[33]

But as Secretary Powell explained, "We are not doing this because we are seeking political advantage…We are doing this because these are human beings in desperate need, and the United States has always been a generous, compassionate country."[34]

Recommendations

U.S. foreign assistance programs need to operate so that they reflect not only our nation's security interests, but our ethical values as well. Here are three macro-reforms that are vital to ensuring this change.

First, the United States must meet the 0.7 percent of GNP target for foreign assistance. Since 1970, our government has been promising the United Nations it would meet this target. But we have never come close.

Second, the United States should re-establish a free-standing foreign assistance agency with cabinet-level rank in order to send the world a clear message that foreign assistance is an important national priority. A similar structure, the Department for International Development, has worked to great effect for our ally, Great Britain.

Third, the United States should reduce its reliance on the Department of Defense as the distributor of so much of its foreign assistance. Under former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, the Pentagon came to play a central role in the distribution of U.S. foreign assistance. The problem is that the Pentagon's increased role is more often a function of necessity rather than design because of the relative weakness and incapacity of other U.S. federal agencies, such as USAID and the State Department.

Embracing these three sets of recommendations will help ensure that U.S. foreign aid programs explicitly embrace our ethical values *and* our national interest. This will build long-term support for such programs at home and abroad.

By contrast, foreign assistance based primarily on national interest often falls victim to competing short-term political and security considerations that threaten the effectiveness, size, and breadth of the funding. In short, doing well for our country by doing well for the world in our foreign aid programs is the smart, effective, and decent thing to do.

Endnotes

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23. Statement by Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs Roger F. Noriega before the House International Relations Committee, May 11, 2005.

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AP Photo

A Faithful Case for Intervention
Our Common Responsibility to Protect Humanity and Prevent Atrocities

Dr. Elizabeth G. Ferris

People of faith struggle every day with the question of how to translate their spiritual values into concrete and appropriate responses to people whose lives are unprotected or endangered by their own government. This responsibility—to protect fellow citizens of the world who face death and mistreatment by tyrants who hide behind national sovereignty, and to prevent such situations from occurring—has been under intense debate since the formation of the modern nation-state.

Since the end of the Cold War, however, a more sweeping understanding has developed of how people of faith should act for the global common good in the face of civil conflicts and tyranny rooted in nation-states. One striking example of this is the interfaith advocacy being carried out through the Save Darfur Coalition (see box below).

The Darfur Campaign's Faith Interventionists

The campaign to end genocide in Darfur includes the American Jewish World Service (which founded the Save Darfur Coalition in 2004), the American Society for Muslim Advancement, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the National Association of Evangelicals. The coalition's national members include the American Islamic Congress, the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations, and the National Black Church Initiative.

Independent of the coalition, many faith-based organizations, such as Church World Service, Islamic Relief, Evangelicals for Darfur, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, and Catholic Relief Services are taking great risks to respond to the victims of the violence in Darfur. And the emergency response arm of the World Council of Churches has worked with its Catholic counterparts to implement one of the largest relief operations in the area.

Yet responding collectively in the face of clear crimes against humanity by nation-state leaders does not come easily to the world's major faiths. The reasons: theological differences in approaches to war and pragmatic uncertainties about the nature of the appropriate response. The relationship between the global common good and the responsibility of the international community to intervene in the internal affairs of other countries in order to protect people whose lives are at risk is known as the "responsibility to protect." This concept has been the subject of intense debate in international circles over the past two decades. I was actively involved in this debate through my involvement with the World Council of Churches (WCC).

The WCC has wrestled with the responsibility to protect since the end of World War II, as it was established in the same formative years as the United Nations. And from the WCC's very beginnings, it confronted questions of when the use of force is justified. The first WCC Assembly in Amsterdam in 1948 stated that:

> War as a method of settling disputes is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. The part which war plays in our present international life is a sin against God and a degradation of man.[1]

Christianity, like all the major world religions, prohibits taking the life of another person, compels the faithful to stand up for the rights of the oppressed, and holds that obedience to God's will is a higher calling than obedience to any human authority.[2] And the values underpinning both the global common good and the responsibility to protect have strong resonance within Christianity, whose beliefs affirm the dignity of each individual human being, stress the interconnectedness of the world's people, and call for solidarity with neighbors in need.

Since that first WCC assembly almost 60 years ago, there have been many efforts by the WCC and the international community to explore conditions in which the use of force might be morally justified. As might be expected from a body that includes some 350 member churches in all parts of the world, the debates within the WCC on particular policy issues do not always result in consensus decisions. Still, the principles behind these debates can provide helpful guidance to policymakers outside the religious community, including leaders who shape the direction of U.S. foreign policy.

Development of an Ecumenical Approach to the Responsibility to Protect

Ecumenical discussions about the responsibility to protect responded to events in the world, as theological discussions often do. During the Cold War, however, these discussions could not avoid being framed by the overarching political conflict between the West, the former Soviet Union, and the then truly communist state of China. This polarization blocked the possibility of collective action by the U.N. Security Council. The first test of a post-Cold War conflict that raised the question of the responsibility to protect was the outbreak of civil war in Somalia in 1990-1991.

Somalia

The dictatorial leader, Mohammed Siyad Barre, fled the country in 1991, leaving competing warlords to battle for power. The civil war, exacerbated by drought, led to widespread famine, which resulted in the deaths of over 150,000 people. Relief agencies found operating in such a violent environment almost impossible and were unable to prevent widespread casualties. Although television screens were filled with images of starving civilians terrorized by militias, international action was slow.

Many Christians, including committed pacifists, wrestled with the question of how the international community could and should respond to Somalia's humanitarian crisis when

there was no Somali government. Should the United Nations send in troops to protect the delivery of humanitarian relief? To restore order? Did the United Nations have the capacity to take on the warlords?

A seminar organized at an ecumenical peace research institute in 1992 grappled with the question of whether there was a "duty to intervene" in situations of widespread suffering. It concluded that there was a moral imperative for intervention. But participants were less clear about what form that intervention should take.

So, too, was the U.N. Security Council, which authorized four different military operations over the next three years, each of which had a different mandate. The first two, UNOSOM I and Operation Provide Relief (which was in essence an airlift to move relief supplies into Somalia), were modestly successful; but the humanitarian needs of the Somalis were immense. In December 1992, at the request of President George H.W. Bush, Operation Restore Hope was launched with the purpose of establishing a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations in Somalia. This was followed in May 1993 with another U.N. intervention, UNOSOM II, also with U.S. leadership, which had a more overtly political mandate, including the promotion and advancement of political reconciliation and the re-establishment of national and regional institutions.

While the warlords had allowed U.N. forces to provide humanitarian assistance, the more overt political mandate of the last U.N. operation led to fierce resistance from the warlords—and to open warfare with U.N. troops. In October 1993, U.S. troops, operating independently of the U.N. command structure, launched a military operation to capture one of the warlords, General Muhammad Farah Aidid. Eighteen U.S. soldiers and nearly 300 Somalis were killed in the firefight, leading both the United States and, a year later, U.N. forces to withdraw from Somalia. Relief organizations that had managed to function with security provided by the military now found it almost impossible to operate in the wake of the final decision to withdraw U.S. and U.N. forces, and almost all of them left the country. By 1994, Somalia was a failed state.

> "Many in ecumenical circles argued that human security and national security are not a dichotomy. The well-being of the United States depends on a just and peaceful world, which means that our national security can be threatened by poverty and violence that is far away."

Christians at that ecumenical seminar in Sweden two years earlier had largely agreed that there was a moral duty to intervene when thousands of people were dying, but it is clear that the response to Somalia fell short of what was needed. The lesson of Somalia for ecumenical discussions was that moral principles are not a sufficient guide to action; the means of intervention was as important as the principle.

The Former Yugoslavia

Even as the agony in Somalia was happening, the breakup of the former Yugoslavia led to a devastating civil war which lasted from 1992 to1995. Unlike Somalia, there were many Christians in the Balkans, and churches were challenged to engage in "ecumenical diplomacy," first to prevent the outbreak of war and then to support efforts to resolve the conflict once war broke out. Churches were particularly troubled by the use of religious imagery by political leaders in the region, and emphasized that this was not a religious conflict between Christians and Muslims or between Catholics and Orthodox.

On the political level, the international community responded with multiple diplomatic initiatives and sent U.N. peacekeepers. But the U.N. peacekeeping force found itself with a limited mandate; there was no peace to keep. In fact, the violence intensified. In the absence of a political solution, humanitarian assistance was provided in extremely difficult circumstances, but the assistance itself raised serious ethical questions.

When relief agencies helped Muslims move from areas where they were under attack by Serbs, were they contributing to ethnic cleansing? Was it morally right to provide food for hungry people while failing to prevent military attacks on them? Was the use of North Atlantic Treaty Organization military force justified to break the three-year-long siege of Sarajevo? Were Western powers using humanitarian assistance as a "moral alibi" for their failure to bring the war to an end?

Indeed, the very efficacy of deploying U.N. peacekeepers came into question when the United Nations was roundly criticized for its failure to protect people in so-called "safe areas," as evidenced by the slaughter of 8,000 men and boys in the safe area of Srebrenica in May 1995. The inability of the Dutch peacekeepers to prevent the massacre led to a soul-searching public debate in the Netherlands about the extent of their responsibility for the deaths of Bosnians under their protection. Although a government-commissioned report, released in 2002, found that responsibility for the massacre was shared between the United Nations and the Dutch government, public reaction in both the Netherlands and Bosnia was intense and divided.

The ecumenical discussions of the Bosnian war emphasized the importance of working to prevent the outbreak of war in the first place, and of continuing to engage churches on all sides of the conflict, even as their military leaders conducted operations against each other. For European church leaders, the war in the former Yugoslavia was particularly painful—after all, it was NATO, not the European Union, that intervened in the civil conflict—and renewed their commitment to develop European institutions that would be able to respond effectively to conflicts in their own region.

Rwanda

The 1994 genocide in Rwanda—and particularly the speed of the killing—took the international community by surprise. Within a few months, some 800,000 people were killed, many by neighbors using machetes and hoes. As news of the killings trickled out, the international

community seemed unable or unwilling to act. Rwanda was a small country, of little strategic interest to the West. What's more, after its experience in Somalia, U.S. interest in intervening in small, distant countries was minimal. And the United Nations, which had troops in Rwanda, had reduced its already small presence by 90 percent when the killings began in earnest.

The 1994 genocide in Rwanda took ecumenical discussions to a new level because churches and the ecumenical movement were forced to confront the fact that they had been unable to prevent the mass slaughter. It was clear that the "duty to intervene" was not just a responsibility of governments and international institutions, but also a challenge to civil society and churches. It was a challenge that Rwandan churches and the ecumenical movement failed to meet—despite the warning signs of growing tension, the escalation of hate radio, and the development of plans to unleash the rampage that were evident before the slaughter began.

> "Intervention is a continuum and we have a vast array of possible tools to use in these cases, which include both positive inducements and punitive measures."

In fact, Rwandan church leadership either were aware of the growing danger and did not act, or else missed warning signs that should have been plain to see. I remember one African WCC colleague addressing a meeting in 1994 in tears, saying:

> We welcomed Rwandan church leaders to our gatherings, but we knew pressure was building in Rwanda. We should have pressed them, challenged them. That's what the ecumenical movement means, to challenge one another. And we didn't do that. We just smiled and accepted their comments that things were fine.

The exodus of Rwandan refugees into neighboring Zaire was swift. In the course of a week, some 800,000 refugees arrived, overwhelming local communities and relief agencies. The U.S Operation Support Hope sent troops to provide logistical support to relief agencies and provide assistance to the refugees for about six weeks. Most observers at the time credited this military intervention with saving many lives.

Churches, like many governments and civil society actors, responded generously with humanitarian assistance after the genocide and continued to assist refugees in what was then Zaire, even when it became clear that some of those receiving assistance were, in fact, the perpetrators of the violence. Humanitarian action became a response, rooted in guilt, to a tragedy which neither the international community nor the churches had been able to prevent.

Kosovo

"Humanitarian intervention" was the term used most often in the days leading up to the 1999 NATO intervention in Kosovo. A WCC seminar in 2000 wrestled again with the conditions

under which such intervention might be justified in order to prevent further bloodshed. There was general agreement that it was not appropriate to link the word "humanitarian" (with its connotations of neutrality and compassion) with the word "intervention," which implied military action which would always be in support of a military mission. But beyond that common ground, there were troubling disagreements.

The WCC participants did agree that sometimes military action might be needed but that the actual deployment of military force was not a humanitarian action. However, there were serious regional differences among representatives from countries in the throes of war. Some wanted immediate intervention because of their experience with the cruelty and chaos of conflict. The participant from Sierra Leone, then in the throes of war, was one such example. But others who had experienced other forms of intervention in the past, such as the participant from Nicaragua, argued that the legacy of U.S. intervention in Central America was far from benign.

There were also theological differences among those urging loyalty to Christian pacifist traditions and those arguing that "Just War" theory offered useful criteria for taking military action in certain cases. The report of the seminar outlined a series of steps that could be taken to respond to situations of widespread human rights abuse, including military force as a last resort. The report from that seminar, which was called "The Responsibility to Protect Endangered Populations," was debated by the WCC's governing body in 2001, though it was unable to endorse the document.

At the same 2001 meeting where the document on "responsibility to protect" was discussed, the WCC agreed to launch a new initiative, a Decade to Overcome Violence in which churches committed themselves to confront violence at all levels—in their families, communities, countries, regions, and the world. Many representatives, however, felt that there was a fundamental contradiction between promising to do everything possible for peace by launching the Decade campaign and at the same meeting admitting that there would be some cases in which military intervention might be morally acceptable. In light of the impasse, the issue was referred back to the churches for further theological reflection with a consensus that more work was needed around the concept of the "responsibility to protect."

This led a number of churches to engage in intensive discussions about the issue. For example, a meeting of Historic Peace Churches in 2001 produced a study paper on "Just Peacemaking," which said:

> A biblically and theologically grounded pacifism regards seeking God's justice as central and integral to a nonviolent philosophy of life…The use of violent force as a 'last resort' to secure justice creates conditions that inhibit the achievement of justice.[3]

The Evangelical Church in Germany noted in its deliberations that the concept of "Just Peace" (instead of "Just War") is central to Christian peace ethics, while the use of military force should always be a last resort. The Church of Norway's study, "Vulnerability and Security," argues that the specific contribution of the churches is to focus on the victim's perspective (Matthew 25, 35) and the service of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5, 18), both of which are at the very core of the Christian message.[4]

The evolution of the argument from "humanitarian intervention" to "responsibility to protect" shifted the emphasis to the people in need of protection rather than the political actors considering the intervention. This was very much in parallel with and influenced by discussions taking place in the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, which was set up by the Canadian government in 2000 and which released its final report in 2001.[5]

Eventually, the United Nations endorsed the concept of the responsibility to protect at the World Summit of 2005, while an ecumenical statement was adopted at the WCC's 9th Assembly the following year which reluctantly left open the possibility of using force to prevent further suffering. The ecumenical conversations influenced the process leading to the U.N. statement, and deliberations at the United Nations contributed to the churches' reflection on the issue.

The term "responsibility to protect" is now being used in a holistic way by churches throughout the world. One hears, for example, about a responsibility to protect the environment, to protect children, to protect the people of Zimbabwe, to protect people living with HIV and AIDS, and so on. While the term is also used by many secular groups, it has a special resonance with churches who understand it in theological terms.

Core Ecumenical Issues of the Responsibility to Protect

Beyond the statements and the debates is a set of core issues that characterize an ecumenical approach to the responsibility to protect—issues that can contribute to U.S. foreign policy debates. In fact, these core issues—interdependence and human security, prevention and collective response—are not just pie-in-the-sky idealistic notions, but rather ideas that resonate with the American public and could be used by U.S. leadership in developing a new direction for U.S. foreign policy.

Interdependence and Human Security

First of all, ecumenical discussions about the responsibility to protect are based on a deeply held recognition of the fundamental interdependence of peoples and nations in the world. While national security remains the dominant principle for debates on U.S. foreign policy, many churches have largely shifted their focus to the concept of human security, which emphasizes that in our interdependent world the security of all of us is linked.

The WCC Eighth Assembly in Harare in 1998, affirmed the theological context of this shifted focus:

> We affirm the emphasis of the gospel on the value of all human beings in the sight of God, on the atoning and redeeming work of Christ that has given every person true dignity, on love as the motive for action, and on love for one's neighbors as the practical expression of active faith in Christ. We are members one of another and when one suffers all are hurt. This is the responsibility Christians bear to ensure the human rights of every person.[6]

Many in ecumenical circles argued that human security and national security are not a dichotomy. The well-being of the United States depends on a just and peaceful world, which means that our national security can be threatened by poverty and violence that is far away. And so the responsibility to protect is rooted not only in moral principles, but in our national interest.

Case in point: Darfur. When we do not protect the people of Darfur, the world is less safe and the United States is less secure. The potential is high for the Darfur crisis to spill into neighboring countries, which could de-stabilize the region, damage relationships among major powers, disrupt economies, and create resentment and despair, all of which breed violence.

The concept of human security complements the idea of the responsibility to protect. A human security approach, for example, looks at the Darfur conflict primarily from the perspective of Darfurians who have a God-given right to abundant life. In contrast, a focus on national security directs attention to the effect of policies on those in a position to intervene. Thus a U.S. national security approach to Darfur would ask: How does the situation in Darfur affect U.S. security?

The answer would consider such factors as the role of the Sudanese government in stopping terrorists who would do harm to the United States, access to Sudanese natural resources, and the regional impact of intervention. It would consider the balance between the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Darfurians with the potential harm to relations between the United States and China, which is the Sudanese government's most important economic ally. While these are important factors, a human security approach argues that they are not the central questions policy makers should consider in order to build long-term security for the Darfurians, for Americans, or indeed for the world.

The Responsibility to Prevent

Secondly, an ecumenical approach to the responsibility to protect is grounded in a clear commitment to working to prevent situations of wide-scale abuse of human rights and war. This responsibility to prevent is perhaps less glamorous than sending in troops for a quick fix, but it is rooted in ecumenical understandings of the need to create sustainable communities of peace and justice.

People of faith are called to a ministry of just peacemaking that works over the long haul to address persistent poverty and injustice and that seeks to resolve conflicts before they escalate into violence. This is the first line of defense against widespread suffering as a result of failed states and escalating conflicts. This would suggest that U.S. policymakers not only do more to address underlying issues of poverty and inequality, but that they see these efforts as a way of strengthening U.S. security, as well as the security of humanity.

The international community has devoted substantial resources over the years to developing early warning systems, but has remained weak—at times paralyzed—in developing appropriate early action. U.N. organizations, for example, sound the alarm when drought threatens a country or

region. International organizations, national governments, and non-governmental organizations have all developed systems to systematically monitor political developments which warn of impending conflicts. In today's media-driven world, we are aware not only of what is happening in Somalia and Palestine, but also of ongoing internal conflicts in Sri Lanka, Colombia, and the Central African Republic, where violence can easily escalate.

> "We need to recognize that sovereignty has limits—just as we now recognize that parental rights are limited. Parents cannot kill and beat their children with impunity anymore; so, too, governments cannot repress and kill their own people while the world stands by."

We also know that the signing of peace agreements does not mean that all problems are resolved and peace has been achieved. The newly established U.N. Peacebuilding Commission and initiatives by the U.S. government to address the urgent but often neglected needs of post-conflict societies are positive signs and should be made a priority by those seeking to prevent widespread human rights abuses. These initiatives are (and should be seen as) an expression of the responsibility to protect, which the faith community can encourage and support.

And when prevention does not work and things go wrong—as they will—we need to wrestle mightily to find the appropriate response. Intervention is a continuum and we have a vast array of possible tools to use in these cases, which include both positive inducements and punitive measures. Some of these measures, such as restrictions on visas and selective sanctions, can be implemented quickly and targeted at those responsible for widespread crimes. Others, such as the delivery of humanitarian assistance, can provide possibilities for monitoring human rights abuses and for establishing benchmarks for governments that lack the capacity to protect their citizens.

In addition, traditional means of conflict resolution, carried out by local groups, may be effective in situations where the international community cannot respond. Measures to hold perpetrators of crimes accountable for their actions are a tremendous advance of this century and can be used more intentionally to deter violence against their citizens. There are many alternatives, short of military force, which should be explored before military action is considered.

Working Collectively

A third core issue of an ecumenical approach to the responsibility to protect is the need to work collectively with other nations, international organizations, and civil society. Ecumenism itself is founded on the belief that by working together churches are able to do more than they would by working on their own. As the modern ecumenical movement developed in the same formative years as the United Nations, the parallels with the development of secular multilateral bodies are obvious.

In recent years, however, there has been an emphasis on mutual vulnerability as a basis for ecumenical relationships. Everyone is vulnerable, the argument goes, and so we must acknowledge our own vulnerability as a basis for relating to one another. Many European churches, for example, are materially wealthy while African churches are bursting at the seams with people but have few financial resources. By recognizing our mutual vulnerability, new ways of relating to one another can be forged. Working with others is not just a more effective way of working on an issue. By admitting that we need others, we open ourselves to the possibility of transformation.

What does this have to do with U.S. foreign policy? In recent years, many U.S. political leaders have been outspoken in their criticism of the United Nations and other multilateral institutions. And indeed, with respect to the responsibility to protect, the record of the United Nations in intervening to save lives has been mixed. In fact, a recent study of 17 instances of humanitarian intervention since 1990 found that nine succeeded in saving lives, four failed to save lives and four had a mixed record.[7] The study concludes that those U.N. efforts were most successful when their mandate was limited. For example, in Somalia, the first U.N. mission focused on allowing humanitarian agencies to deliver needed food and relief items. And it largely worked. But when a subsequent U.N. mission broadened its mandate to include political reconciliation and governance, the United Nations was not seen as a neutral player and thus came under attack.

In Rwanda, the U.N. peacekeeping mission was an abject failure because governments of the world, including the United States, were unwilling to make a commitment to peacekeeping at a time when it could have made the difference between life and death for hundreds of thousands of Rwandans. In Bosnia, U.N. operations are generally credited with successfully delivering humanitarian assistance but their contribution to the eventual Dayton peace agreement is much less certain.

There is a tendency in today's U.S. political context to either go it alone or to first try to work through the United Nations, and if that does not produce the desired results quickly, then to go it alone. The ecumenical experience would suggest that in the continuing struggle to reach consensus on important issues—even when such discussions are long and arduous and do not have an immediate payoff—the results are more effective than when one country takes unilateral action. The desire to respond quickly must be balanced with the need to carefully consider the possible consequences of such actions.

The fact is there is considerable support, both globally and in the United States, for the United Nations to intervene in situations to protect vulnerable populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity, should national authorities fail to do so. An April 2007 global poll by the Program on International Policy Attitudes, for example, found that 74 percent of Americans, 76 percent of Chinese, and majorities in most of the 10 other countries polled (Armenia, Poland, France, the Palestinian Territories, Israel, and India) agreed that the United Nations had a responsibility to intervene in such cases.[8]

In order for this potential to be realized, however, much more effort is needed to strengthen the United Nations, since it can only do what its members allow it to do. Concerning the responsibility to protect, this means working to prevent conflicts from emerging and working

with governments and civil society after peace agreements are signed. Most of all, it means devoting resources to improving the toolkit of ways in which the international community can respond creatively, rapidly, and effectively in situations of large-scale human suffering.

Difficult Issues Involved in the Responsibility to Protect

Discussion of the responsibility to protect raises a number of difficult issues, including the issue of national sovereignty. How do we as the international community protect people under assault by their own government? Which cases warrant intervention? And who should decide when protection is needed? Although these are all thorny issues, theological principles suggest ways of addressing them.

National Sovereignty

Sovereignty is the big stumbling block in the debate over the responsibility to protect, both within the ecumenical movement and in broader international discussions. Sovereignty is the right to exercise exclusive political authority over a certain area or population. Initially, sovereignty was understood as the domain under the control of a sovereign, such as a ruler or king. But the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 established the modern nation-state system based on sovereignty and its corollary principles of self-determination, the equality of states, and non-intervention by states in the internal affairs of one another.

The universal respect for sovereignty has some clear positive consequences. It reduces the use of force between nations and increases the predictability of relationships. It also affirms the right to self-determination and serves as a moral defense of small, weak nations from the interference of more powerful states.

Respect for sovereignty is a bedrock of international relations. In fact, the 1948 International Convention Against Genocide is the only case of international law in which the international community has accepted the legitimacy, indeed the duty, to disregard the sovereignty of a given state in order to prevent a crime against humanity. This is the reason most governments in the world are hesitant to use the term "genocide" in describing a situation; under the terms of this convention, they are obligated to take action to prevent genocide and to punish its perpetrators.

But sovereignty in today's interdependent world must have a different character than in bygone eras. Transnational threats—whether tainted pet food or terrorism or avian flu—cross international borders with frightening speed and ease. Decisions by governments on "domestic" issues have consequences far beyond their borders. U.S. policies on subsidies to our farmers or on automobile emissions, for example, might very well have a greater effect on the well-being of people in other countries than many U.S. "foreign" policies.

In a global village, the borders among nations are breaking down, with serious consequences for sovereignty. But just as importantly, the emergence of universal human rights norms and standards since World War II puts limits on the freedom of governments to do whatever they want

to their own citizens. In 1991, then-U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar highlighted this when he said:

> It is now increasingly felt that the principle of non-interference within the essential domestic jurisdiction of states cannot be regarded as a protective barrier behind which human rights can be massively or systematically violated with impunity. The fact that in diverse situations the United Nations has not been able to prevent atrocities cannot be accepted as an argument, legal or moral, against the necessary corrective action, especially when peace is also threatened.[9]

We need to recognize that sovereignty has limits—just as we now recognize that parental rights are limited. Parents cannot kill and beat their children with impunity anymore; so too, governments cannot repress and kill their own people while the world stands by. Today civil-society campaigns challenge the notion that the governments of Sudan or Burma are free to violate the human rights of their citizens with impunity.

Christians have lived for a long time with the tension between living in this world—and accepting the authority of their government—and living in accord with God's will for their lives. There have been many times when Christians, because of their faith, have resisted authority and turned to civil disobedience, sometimes at great personal sacrifice. Similarly, many Christians argue that in the face of evil—as occurred in Rwanda or Nazi Germany—the principles of sovereignty must give way to a greater good: protecting life.

Protecting People Under Threat

A second difficult issue has to do with the nature of the action taken to protect people under threat. Although there is universal recognition and acceptance that the international community has a responsibility to prevent deadly conflict, most of the debate about the responsibility to protect has focused on the use of military force. The International Commission's impressive work on the responsibility to protect includes many pages of possible actions that can be taken in response to a state's abuse of its citizens, but most attention has focused on when a military response should be initiated.

Yet intervention can be seen as a continuum. It can include both positive and coercive components that encompass such actions as: fact-finding missions, promises of new assistance or withdrawal of assistance, diplomatic demarches, disinvestment or economic sanctions, monitoring by human rights monitors, police action, deployment of military force, and many other actions.

Many progressive-minded policy thinkers are quite comfortable advocating for conditionality in foreign aid to countries such as Burma in protest of its repressive regime. And certainly the disinvestment campaign was a factor in bringing about regime change in the apartheid government of South Africa. Unfortunately, some of the "nonviolent" measures can cause as much civilian suffering as military force.

Economic sanctions, for example, often have serious negative effects on the health of the civilian population, as evidenced in the cases of Cuba, Iraq, and Serbia.[10] Often they hurt ordinary citizens more than the policymakers. In response to this, the World Council of Churches in 1994 developed criteria for determining the applicability and effectiveness of sanctions, which note that "any resort to a coercive strategy must aim at the reconstruction of peaceable and humane relationships, take great care to avoid or minimize suffering of the general populace or any innocent groups, and avoid causing more harm than good."[11]

When and Where to Offer Protection

A third difficult issue has to do with the selectivity of intervention. The international community responded to the civil war in Bosnia, but not to the wide-scale suffering in Chechnya. It responded to the struggles of minorities seeking self-determination in Kosovo, but not to those in Tibet or Kurdistan. The brutal Taliban regime was allowed to continue to repress its citizens— until suspicions that the country was sheltering al-Qaeda gave rise to military intervention after September 11, 2001.

As long as intervention is perceived as being selectively implemented, it will be seen as politically motivated. The perception among many churches in the global South is that the national interests of the powerful will always trump the global common good. But people of faith have lived with the tension of living in an unjust world for 2,000 years and longer and have had to make choices about when to act and when to be silent. It is not possible to respond to every human rights violation, for example, but it is a greater sin to stand by and do nothing.

Ecumenical principles suggest that the scale of the violations and the possibility that taking action will make a difference have to be constantly assessed. Moral outrage is a necessary but not sufficient condition for action.

The Role of the United Nations

A fourth difficult issue has to do with the role of the United Nations. Of course, it does not have a perfect track record in protecting vulnerable populations. While the ecumenical community has been one of the United Nation's strongest supporters, there is a perception, particularly in the global South, that it is the tool of the powerful and without structural reform can never serve as the true collective voice of the world's people.

U.N. authorization of military intervention does not guarantee moral justification or success. But in spite of its shortcomings, the United Nations is the global governance system that we have, and we should devote far more political, human, and financial capital to ensuring that it lives up to the very high expectations with which it was created.

However, we also need to consider ways of including civil society in our institutions of global governance. Today, civil society groups as diverse as the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, national human rights commissions, labor unions, women's organizations, environmental activist groups, and professional associations are on the margins of the world's decision-making

structures. But the reality is that civil society is the source of much of the world's creativity and conscience.

There are also debates about whether it is legitimate for states to intervene in the absence of U.N. Security Council action. Consider Former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan's words on this topic:

> To those for whom the greatest threat to the future of the international order is the use of force in the absence of a Security Council mandate, one might ask—not in the context of Kosovo but in the context of Rwanda—if, in those dark days and hours leading up to the genocide, a coalition of States had been prepared to act in defense of the Tutsi population, but did not receive prompt Council authorization, should such a coalition have stood aside and allowed the horror to unfold?[12]

If the United Nations is unable to act, are there situations where it is morally justifiable for others to take up this responsibility? If so, what are the conditions—and limitations—on such actions? Is intervention only a tool for powerful governments? Can regional institutions be supported and equipped to play a more significant role in preventing conflicts and in protecting people when violence emerges in their regions? Can world leaders, for example, provide tangible support to African Union forces which are struggling to prevent further killings in Darfur?

There are no easy answers to these questions. But the collective struggle to discern the morally right and politically possible response to situations where people are in peril make possible the collective, effective exercise of the responsibility to protect. Today, this is one of the most fundamental questions U.S. foreign policymakers, concerned faith leaders, and U.S. citizens now face. It goes to the heart of who we are as a people and as a member of the community of nations.

Toward U.S. Foreign Policies that Affirm the Responsibility to Protect

The global common good is rooted in our basic human interdependence. For better or worse, our fate as individuals and as a nation is linked with others. And so, we need to work with other countries and with other global institutions in pursuit of a higher common interest. Our vision of sovereignty needs to change.

First and foremost, the United States needs to make a sustained commitment to peace-making and to peace-building once conflicts have been brought to an end. Second, we must respond to conflicts before they become tragedies and find creative ways to address the grievances that lead to conflict, in that way moving toward real reconciliation.

But when prevention is not successful and there is large-scale loss of human life, the international community needs to respond. The response needs both to be based on principles and to be pragmatic. Military intervention should only be used when other means have failed and when there is a reasonable chance of success. Although it is perhaps more morally satisfying to act only on the basis of principles, we need to recognize the reality that intervention will be inconsistently

applied. There are cases in which taking action to protect a beleaguered minority could pose a major threat to the security of humanity, such as in Chechnya or Tibet.

What would be the components of a U.S. foreign policy that affirms the global common good through the responsibility to protect? The following six actions, drawn from the core moral principles of the ecumenical approach of the responsibility to protect as laid out above, offer concrete methods for turning principle into pragmatic action. These actions would not only improve human security through appropriate responses to wide-scale human rights abuses, but would also enhance the standing of the United States in the world and increase our national security.

- **Respect the sovereignty of other nations.** The United States needs to work with global and regional organizations in cases in which sovereignty is being used as a cover for human rights abuses. The ecumenical movement has consistently defended the principle of sovereignty, seeing the integrity of states as essential to peace and security. But governments of weaker countries need to be assured that the exercise of the responsibility to protect will not serve as an excuse by the powerful to intervene in the weaker countries' domestic policies. By working collectively and transparently on these issues, suspicion of the intentions of the powerful may be assuaged.

- **Help multilateral institutions respond to mass violations of human rights.** The United States needs to be creative in its commitment to shaping effective multilateral institutions so that they can respond appropriately and quickly to prevent mass violations of human rights. The toolkit of options and the continuum of intervention need to be recognized, studied, and enhanced. In particular, we need to know more about cases that have worked, to understand the broad effects of different kinds of sanctions, and to consider how regional bodies can play a more effective role. And in cases in which military action is needed, the United States could take a leadership role in supporting regional initiatives and in providing the United Nations with a standing rapid-deployment force to enable a timely collective response.

- **Accept international standards.** The United States needs to be willing to consider the application of international standards to the United States. When the U.S. government announces that it will not be subject to the International Criminal Court or ratify basic human rights instruments (such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child), not only is the international system weakened, but our nation's standing in the world (and our national security) suffers. The United States is not invulnerable. In recognizing its vulnerability and being willing to open itself to the standards agreed upon by the international community, the United States could gain a greater moral standing in the world.

- **Recognize the responsibility of power.** Because of its position as the world's sole superpower, the United States is in a leadership position. But leadership for what? In a national debate on the U.S. role in the world, we should not shy away from reclaiming the moral high ground. Much U.S. power comes not from its armies and consumers, but from the values of freedom, democracy, equality, and participation. This is what other countries admire—or

used to admire before President George W. Bush turned this moral equation on its head by trumpeting these core values to support the unilateral U.S. invasion of Iraq and subsequent mismanaged occupation of the country. By affirming these core values and joining them with a commitment to the global common good, we can again play a leadership role in creating global systems that ensure vulnerable populations are protected.

- **Build a domestic constituency in support of the global common good.** The responsibility to protect and the responsibility to prevent are not only part of our nation's historical heritage, but are evident in public life today. The incredible group of former Peace Corps volunteers, the surge in popularity of study abroad programs, and the outpouring of support for initiatives such as Habitat for Humanity represent a yearning of Americans to engage with their communities and the world. With presidential leadership and vision, a constituency could be developed that would support U.S. political leaders to sustain preventive measures and make difficult moral choices when prevention is not successful. The faith community is particularly well-placed to mobilize support for these actions.

- **Support the independent role of civil society.** Civil society currently plays a crucial role in protecting vulnerable people; this role needs to be affirmed, encouraged, and at times, challenged. Non-governmental organizations, for example, are increasingly called on to protect civilians in conflict zones, and assistance is linked to protection. Thus, providing assistance to displaced women may prevent their being abused or turning to prostitution to feed their children. Churches have a responsibility to protect by working with communities, by taking actions to prevent the outbreak of violence, and by sounding the alarm when there are signs of serious abuse.

Conclusion

Engaging the issue of the responsibility to protect raises many questions on different levels: political, economic, moral, theological, institutional, and personal. The answers to these questions and the nature of the discussions will have consequences not only for our children in the near-future, but for the more distant future of everyone living on this planet. The stakes are very, very high.

In this chapter I have outlined the pathways taken by concerned Christians in search of answers to these questions. But I would like to conclude with some observations of how the responsibility to protect is inexorably linked to the global common good.

Working for the global common good means being willing to challenge established notions of political life in favor of bold actions to prevent the deaths of those who are weak. And working for the global common good requires a collective response when natural disasters bring devastation, when wars break out between countries, or when a government refuses to, or is unable to, protect its own citizens.

While the international community has developed a means of responding collectively, albeit imperfectly, to victims of natural disasters and to inter-state conflicts, there is less consensus about the responsibility to intervene when people suffer at the hands of their own government.

We need to build that consensus, both in the United States and abroad, and then act on those agreed-upon values. Humanity demands nothing less.

Endnotes

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AP Photo

Practicing the Global Common Good
A Policymaker's Point of View

Tom Daschle and John D. Podesta

Our nation's capital city is at the center of many important and influential debates on some of the most vital issues facing the world, yet in the eyes of many, Washington is a caricature of unprincipled government—self-interested actors looking to advance their own careers and interests at the expense of the common good. This caricature is well-earned in some ways. Washington is continually rocked by stories of corruption and deceit that lend credence to the belief that personal profit or position mostly triumphs in the back corridors of power. These scandals, however, obscure the vibrant debate on matters of policy and principle—debates that are grounded in the ideals of the global common good.

Indeed, the central tenets of the global common good presented in the essays in this volume are in fact embraced throughout Washington. Across the many agencies and branches of government, elected representatives and appointed and career policymakers represent a kaleidoscope of belief systems. Secular or religious, these men and women are influenced heavily by their very personal and very individual beliefs. But the link between the divergent beliefs of our diverse country is our shared humanity.

After all, most Americans believe the United States has a unique responsibility in world affairs and expect their leaders to act on that responsibility. So far in this book, we've looked at how the United States can best employ American power and prosperity to help alleviate suffering, protect the vulnerable, and create a better world for both present and future generations. We believe these principles define the global common good and should guide U.S. foreign policy for the benefit of our nation and all humanity. We believe the exercise of these principles is not only possible but imperative.

American Leadership and Promotion of the Global Common Good

History and current events demonstrate that American foreign policy often promotes the global common good. Our leaders, past and present, have embraced many of the ideals discussed in this book, such as the concepts of "just war" and "the responsibility to protect," or the essential humanity of foreign assistance and outlawing torture. More recently, protecting the environment has increasingly become recognized as a global common good. Our personal experiences in both the executive and legislative branches have proven to us that when decisions such as these are made, values play an essential role.

Sanctioning and implementing the use of force is the most contentious of policy issues. The caricature of Washington has it that war is waged to gain more oil, or more contracts for big business, or in pursuit of imperial ambitions, or to "wag the dog" to divert the attention of the

American public away from some other issue. In fact, authorizing the use of force is rarely a straightforward decision, but one never divorced from our highest principles.

All uses of force must be just. Sometimes we are forced to stand firm against aggression. And sometimes there is a responsibility to protect the innocent abroad—conditions when we are compelled by our sheer humanity to act when the humanity of others is being denied. Force, alas, is sometimes the only language understood by the perpetrators. In the NATO intervention in Kosovo in 1999, for example, just war and the responsibility to protect went hand in hand. Diplomacy had been exhausted on the deaf ears of Serbian leaders, and the plight of the Kosovar Albanians was immediate and grave. When action was taken, the use of force was neither excessive nor misused, as our mission sought to protect the innocent and enforce international law.

That war was the first fought almost entirely from the air, raising a new set of ethical considerations for the White House and Congress. Ethicists such as Michael Walzer argue that conducting a war entirely from the air, which lowers the risk to our troops but increases the risk of innocent people being killed in bombing, fundamentally changes the just war calculus for the United States. Walzer goes so far as to echo Albert Camus, writing that "you can't kill unless you are prepared to die."[1]

Walzer and others underestimate the risks taken by NATO pilots and personnel in Kosovo and Serbia, yet the United States did heed some of those arguments at the time. Case in point: The United States instituted a rigorous review of all targets and made special calculations of the potential collateral damage of all targeting decisions. These are hard decisions to make, yet they are part and parcel of a just war military strategy that builds on the principles of the global common good.

> "In the 21st century, U.S. interests have become truly global and since our actions are also global, we cannot leave our values at the ocean's edge. American leaders must remember that our foreign policy is perceived abroad as a representation of our values at home."

Our nation has a much longer history of treating individuals humanely and outlawing torture. The founding fathers wrote in the Bill of Rights that no "cruel and unusual punishment" shall be inflicted upon those accused or convicted of wrongdoing. In 1949, the United States signed the Fourth Geneva Convention, which bans torture and states that prisoners of war "shall in all circumstances be treated humanely." Then, in 1994, the United States ratified the U.N. Convention Against Torture. Despite our own checkered past of living up to these ideals— most notably our past treatment of African Americans and Native Americans—we have made significant strides in practicing what we preach both at home and abroad.

To our profound regret, the Bush administration has failed to uphold these principles, as evidenced by the heinous treatment of inmates at Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay. The administration's actions represent a radical departure from traditional American values of

humane and civilized treatment and our country's longstanding compliance with domestic and international law. Those who would argue that we need to forsake the liberties of some to secure the liberties of others misunderstand the fundamental American principle underscored by John F. Kennedy when he promised we would bear any burden to protect liberty.

Global environmental justice is a far more recent principle for most Americans and their political representatives and government officials in Washington. After a long slumber, the United States is now taking important steps to develop more environmentally friendly policies. In fact, local and state leaders are well ahead of our national leaders, making up for the lack of progress in combating global warming at a national level by recognizing the huge ethical and security imperatives at stake and then acting on those convictions.

Even though the United States has not ratified the Kyoto Protocol, 522 mayors have pledged that their cities will meet the standards defined by these global accords. Officials believe that the mayors' actions played a significant role in the 1.3 percent drop in U.S. fossil fuel-related emissions in 2006.[2] And the recent announcement by the National Governors Association that states should play a greater role in combating climate change will only build on the good work started by many of America's mayors.

These early statements of principle from the American heartland helped prompt the U.S. Senate this past summer to pass an important energy bill. The new legislation will promote greater use of biofuels, penalize gasoline price gouging, encourage more government investigations into oil companies' wholesale and retail pricing decisions, strengthen federal support for research into fuel-efficient vehicles, and promote projects that test capturing carbon dioxide from coal-burning plants.[3] The House soon followed by passing its own bill.

This is a good start, but we must improve on these initial steps at the federal level. National policymakers must learn from the actions of their local counterparts to take global action on this issue of critical importance. Only when policymakers in Washington grasp the shared humanity implicit in protecting our planet from the ravages of global warming will they take the steps necessary in the United States to protect those in the world most vulnerable to climate change.

Conversely, the use of foreign aid in the promotion of the global common good is a far more controversial topic for policymakers than it should be. The growing perception of foreign aid as a "giveaway" of taxpayer money has contributed to Congress' inability to pass a foreign aid authorization since 1985. Yet foreign assistance is essential for both U.S. national security interests and our moral stature in the world. Much of the developing world relies on aid from the United States. The aid recipients see the United States as a beacon of hope, where the fundamental well-being of people is not constrained by borders or nationalities.

When the two of us were serving in government, we acted directly on this vision, proudly joining in a global effort—alongside a remarkable coalition that included Pope John Paul II and rock star Bono—to increase foreign aid funding dramatically in 1999 and 2000 for highly indebted poor countries. More recent instances of U.S. relief aid after natural disasters, such as the 2004 tsunami and earthquakes in Iran and Pakistan, prove that the United States sees itself as a first responder to global humanitarian crises. In a clear show of how bipartisan U.S.

foreign policy can further the global common good, former Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton teamed up to lead the tsunami response.

More telling, perhaps, are the actions of average Americans on the front lines—from the employees of the U.S. Agency for International Development to the men and women of the U.S. military—who implement the foreign aid decisions made every day by the U.S. government to promote the well-being of people around the world. That is why slashing non-military assistance foreign aid and subsuming the role of USAID within the Department of State only signal the intention of the United States to decrease its commitment to the impoverished people of the world. U.S. foreign aid and development assistance are essential components of the U.S. role as a moral leader. Few decisions a policymaker faces are more indicative of our commitment to our shared humanity.

Doing Well by Doing Good

In the 21st century, U.S. interests have become truly global. And since our actions are also global, we cannot leave our values at the ocean's edge. American leaders must remember that our foreign policy is perceived abroad as a representation of our values at home. At the moment, much of the international community considers us an unrestrained, belligerent nation that disobeys international law, disrespects the environment, and disregards those in need of greater protection and aid. Such perceptions have led to a dangerous decline in America's moral authority. At no point in our history have we been more disliked or more distrusted around the world than today.

We cannot hope to live up to our values or protect our interests without a foreign policy that embodies both. The issues discussed in the preceding pages of this book, and especially the policy recommendations presented by their authors, are of critical importance for U.S. foreign policy decision-makers. Pursuing the global common good will enable the United States to regain its moral authority.

In particular, the manner in which this generation of U.S. leaders handles climate change—an existential challenge of particularly acute moral and security significance—will set the tone for a new century of principled U.S. foreign policy. It is the central challenge our statesmen must confront in order to live up to American ideals and values.

We both have confidence our leaders can rise to this challenge because we fervently believe that the global common good is not a partisan idea. Rather, it is the bridge between opposing ideologies. Though many policymakers and politicians believe in different means to achieve their goals, we must all recognize that often enough we do desire similar ends. The ONE Vote '08 campaign, which seeks to make global health and extreme poverty priorities in the 2008 presidential campaign, is one such example of a bipartisan effort to find common ground, despite differing beliefs.[4]

We have risen to such a challenge before in our recent history. Consider the origins of the Truman Doctrine. As the United States and the Soviet Union slipped inexorably into the Cold War, U.S. leaders in 1947 feared that a Europe in ashes would be unable to fight off the expansion of Soviet Communism. In Truman's bid to aid the faltering regimes in Greece

and Turkey, he needed support from the Republican Congress, some of whose members were increasingly looking inward.

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As one story goes, Truman called Republican Senator Arthur Vandenburg and other congressional leaders into his office to sell the plan. Truman's secretary of state, George C. Marshall, forthrightly explained the need to urgently fund the Greeks and Turks, but there was little immediate response. Dean Acheson, Marshall's undersecretary of state at the time (and his successor), spoke up, urging his audience to understand that, as author David McCullough summarized it, "Greece was the rotten apple that would infect the barrel." Without U.S. aid, he warned, Soviet Communism would spread throughout Europe.

Vandenburg turned to Truman and said that if the president would explain it to Congress in that same way, Truman would have Vandenburg's support and that of Congress as well. This aid in opposition to Communist expansion became known as the Truman Doctrine, and was followed by widespread aid to Europe in the form of the Marshall Plan. Despite Republican aims of cutting spending, Truman and Acheson were able to strike a common chord that united the parties by highlighting the moral and security threat posed by Soviet expansion.[5] It was these acts of generosity and leadership that helped secure the U.S. position as the leader of the free world in the decades to follow.

The history of American foreign policy is replete with the stories of statesmen struggling to stay true to their principles, despite the weight of the world bearing down on them. It is even in those darkest moments of the collective national memory, such as the battle against fascism, where principle shines through in even the seemingly most immoral of times.

Emerging from those dark days, Harry Truman articulated the hope that still inspires U.S. leaders:

> We have this America not because we are of a particular faith, not because our ancestors sailed from a particular foreign port. We have our America because of our common aspiration to remain free and our determined purpose to achieve for ourselves, and for our children, a more abundant life in keeping with our highest ideals.[6]

As new leadership comes to power in 2009, they would do well to remember that U.S. foreign policy represents our "highest ideals." Our leaders cannot disentangle the values of the global common good from the national security and foreign policy of our country.

Endnotes

1. Michael Walzer, *Arguing About War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 101.

2. "Cities Take Lead on Environment As Debate Drags At Federal Level," *Washington Post*, June 9, 2007, p. A1, available at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/06/08/AR2007060802779.html.

3. "Senate Passes Energy Bill," *Washington Post*, June 22, 2007, p. D1, available at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/06/21/AR2007062101026.html.

4. Tom Daschle is a national co-chair of the One Vote '08 campaign.

5. This story is recounted in David McCullough, *Truman* (New York: Touchstone, 1992), pp. 541–2.

6. Speech by President Harry Truman at a Conference of the Federal Council of Churches, March 16, 1946, available at: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=12599.

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