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HOW NEW IS THE NEW WORLD ORDER?: THE DANGERS OF IDEOLOGY AND TRIBALISM

Ernest W. Lefever

I. Introduction

We Americans live in a shrill, media-saturated society. There is a confusion of tongues, facts, and ideas. I suspect that the political class in Washington is more confused than the senior class at Macalester, but that remains to be seen.

I will respond to the call of the International Roundtable by addressing a highly controversial issue—the promise and perils of the post – Cold War world. I will attempt to separate facts from opinion. As Churchill once said, “Facts are better than dreams.” He did not outlaw dreams but said it was dangerous to confuse reality with illusions.

My views on ethics and politics are drawn as much from observing the world around me as from books. I have a hefty respect for facts and firsthand observations. Immediately after Hiroshima, I lived and worked in Britain and Germany for three years and saw the wreckage of two totalitarian regimes. Since then, I have visited more than seventy-five countries in all parts of the world. I have met presidents, prime ministers, and kings in Europe, Asia, and Africa, but I have not confined myself to interviewing celebrities. I have visited coal mines, farms, factories, prisons, military camps, and, most important, sites of man’s inhumanity against man—refugee camps, concentration camps, and the Warsaw ghetto.

II. Third Visit to the Soviet Union

In October 1991, on my third visit to the Soviet Union—just ten weeks before the final collapse of the Soviet Empire—I went to Moscow to witness and celebrate the death throes of the communist world. Forty years before, I had predicted its demise, but the speed of the final events took me—and virtually everyone else—by surprise.

The political and spiritual wreckage of seventy years of Stalin and his successors was vividly underscored during a lively ninety-minute encounter I had with three dozen graduate students at Moscow University. After my brief lecture on religion and politics, we exchanged views on Soviet history, Gorbachev and Yeltsin, Marx and Lenin, and what it meant to live in a responsible state. The students applauded Ronald Reagan for calling the USSR an “evil empire” and for demanding, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!” Reagan’s courage and honesty had clearly made him a hero.

After responding to their questions, I asked bluntly, “What hope do you have for the future?” Dead silence. The students looked at one another nervously. Finally, a professor born just after the October Revolution said, “Hope! They don’t even know what the word means. How can they have hope after seven decades of lies and broken promises?” I was stunned. Had not Reagan’s tough stance against Soviet nuclear missiles and Gorbachev’s acknowledgment that the Soviet economy had failed led to the liberation of Eastern Europe? Had not the Wall of Shame been torn down? Were these not signs of hope?

Indeed they were. But these resounding victories for freedom seemed far away from Moscow’s dreary food lines, corrupt bureaucrats, and spiritual poverty. The brutal system was dying, but its bitter legacy hung like an albatross around the necks of these students and their contemporaries. Why were they so hopeless, so cynical? It was, perhaps, a reflection of the somber Russian soul. But it was more. The corrosive impact of communism on the character and faith of its subjects lasted three generations, and it would take a long time, at best, to haul away the moral and political wreckage. The Berlin Wall was a physical barrier; it could be torn down in seven days. Hitler had only twelve years to wreak havoc in Europe, and his evil empire

was destroyed in six years by the combined might of the Western Allies and the Soviet Union.

Since 1917, Soviet citizens had been compelled to worship the false gods of Marx and Lenin, to dream of a secular utopia that would never be, and to endure a nightmare of brutality and lies. The old gods had failed, but neither the students nor their parents had yet found a new and convincing god to replace them. They were reaching out for a believable faith, a compelling cause. They longed for the fresh air of freedom, a sense of justice, to be actors rather than pawns.

At the root, the Marxist-Leninist world-view and the Soviet state contained the seeds of their own destruction. The utopian dream of a classless society had failed because it did not take seriously either original sin or man's unquenchable thirst for freedom and dignity.

Communism is dead. Many forces deserve credit for killing it, including Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the late Andrei Sakharov, and the persistent faith of simple Russian Orthodox believers and other Christians. Outside the Soviet Union, much credit goes to writers like Reinhold Niebuhr, George Orwell, and Arthur Koestler, and to political leaders like Presidents Truman and Reagan. But, ultimately, communism was mortally wounded by the millions of decent people the world over who knew in their hearts that tyranny over mind and body violates the God-given right to freedom.

Today, I am going to defend the following four propositions with reference to concrete facts from recent history:

1. The end of the Cold War has not abolished politics.
2. The two greatest enemies of peace, justice, and freedom are crusading ideologies and rampant tribalism.
3. The United Nations is a limited instrument of peace.
4. In the final analysis, ideas — good and bad ideas — not economics, drive history.

III. Predatory Ideologies

Messianic ideologies in our turbulent century have given rise to the three most monstrous tyrannies in history — the Soviet

Union, Nazi Germany, and Communist China. Together they have been responsible for the taking of 150 million lives, give or take 10 million. Mao Tse-tung, the greatest monster, may have killed as many as 80 million Chinese. Each of these totalitarian regimes has also overrun or attempted to overrun neighboring states.

Big wars are usually caused by predatory powers seeking to conquer other states — Mussolini's Italy, Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Soviet Union, and Japan's imperialists. In these four cases, aggression was carried out in the name of a crusading ideology, a utopian dream, and a missionary impulse linked to race, religion, or a vague historic destiny.

The danger of political zealotry was recognized by William Graham Sumner in 1934, a few years after Hitler published *Mein Kampf*. Sumner said, "If you want war, nourish a doctrine. Doctrines are the most frightful tyrants to which men are ever subject, because doctrines get inside of a man's own reason and betray him against himself."

Hitler's Thousand Year Reich and Stalin's socialist paradise have been reduced to dust. Even though the Soviet Union is no more, two outposts of its former empire still hang on — North Korea and Castro's Cuba. The communist People's Republic of China is also still with us, but its regime is less harsh and life is more free.

Yet, the totalitarian idea and the totalitarian temptation have not been eradicated from the human drama. Out of the rubble of failed systems, the chaos of defeat, and the agony of alienated peoples, a new totalitarian savior could again arise proclaiming a new utopia.

For the immediate future, however, the totalitarian menace has passed and its dangers have been eclipsed by other serious but less momentous threats. The Cold War — the historic confrontation between the Soviet Union and the American-led alliance — has ended with a victory for the democracies, but the never-ending struggle of power and purpose among men and nations goes on. The lowercase cold war will always be with us.

The world is still very dangerous and conflicted. Within the former USSR are bitter tensions raging among hostile nationalities. Russia and the Ukraine are squabbling over who is to control nuclear arms. Religious fanaticism and "ethnic cleansing"

have borne bitter fruit in the Middle East and the former Yugoslavia. Outlaw states like Iran, Iraq, Libya, and North Korea—motivated by both ideology and tribalism—continue to threaten the peace.

IV. “The Tears of a Stranger Are Only Water”

Turning to the other deadly force, tribalism, we can see its impact most clearly in Africa. Since tumbling into independence in the 1960s, the new African states have been whipsawed by a resurgent tribalism that has triggered the slaughter of millions. We have seen it in its rawest form this year in Rwanda, where hundreds of thousands of innocent people have been brutally killed or driven to their death.

According to Professor George Ayittey of American University, at least six million Africans have perished since 1960, after Britain, France, and Belgium had granted their former colonies independence. More than 5.4 million have been made refugees, not including 13 million persons displaced in their own countries.

Other basic human rights have also taken a beating in black Africa, most of whose countries are now ruled by military or civilian dictators. Corruption and kleptocracy are rife. President-for-life Mobutu of Zaire is a tragic example, especially after his promising beginning in the early 1960s. Since then, he has wasted or pocketed much of the massive Western aid—more than a billion dollars from Washington alone. He has accumulated a dizzying array of real estate in Africa and Europe, including a Paris townhouse and a sixteenth-century castle in Spain. Estimates of his wealth range from \$2 to \$8 billion. Ambassador Smith Hempstone said, “Mobutu’s venality would have made Ferdinand Marcos blush.”

Throughout tropical Africa, there has been little movement toward democratic freedom or economies that provide more than a bare subsistence for the great majority of their people. In some places slavery and cannibalism have again reared their ugly heads.

Tribalism and religious zealotry have one tragic element in common—the absence of a universal ethic that regards all persons as equally worthy in the eyes of God. Different tribes can

and usually do coexist peacefully, but as we have seen in Rwanda and a dozen different African states, tribal hostility lies just beneath the surface and can be ignited by ruthless leaders seeking to gain or retain power. The hostility between tribes is rooted in a tribal ethic that limits loyalty to and respect for one's own tribe. As the old proverb puts it, "The tears of a stranger are only water" — a sharp contrast to the Good Samaritan ethic that says anyone in need is a child of God worthy of respect and compassion.

In political terms, the narrow tribal ethic leaves no room for a loyal opposition. The demagogues and dictators who run much of black Africa today have played the tribal card to the hilt in crushing their real or imagined enemies.

Further, each new tropical African state was artificially created and each is still trying to become a nation — one people embracing a common territory, language, culture, and political system. As yet, none has achieved full nationhood, and the prospect is dim. If it took a thousand years for the barbarian tribes of Europe to become nations, how long will it take the African tribes that missed the Renaissance, the Reformation, the Magna Carta, the American Revolution, and the Industrial Revolution?

Sadly, while Idi Amin and Milton Obote were engaged in tribal genocide, many "good people" looked the other way, preferring instead to condemn South Africa's apartheid. Racism in any form is wrong, and one innocent victim is one too many. But, irony of ironies, South Africa, the target of UN sanctions and the whipping boy of the continent, may be moving into a position of leadership because it now has, at least in theory, a nonracial and nontribal government. The same laws apply equally to everyone, and one hopes that neither Marxist ideology nor tribalism will subvert the rule of law.

I have focused on Africa, but I must emphasize that tribalism is a universal phenomenon. My ethnic group against yours can be seen in Canada between the French-speaking and English-speaking citizens. And, alas, tribalism is growing in the United States, which a few short decades ago was thought of as a melting pot of many peoples all striving and working together. Now various groups of hyphenated Americans — African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and Indigenous-Americans — are vying

for victim status at the hands of a would-be benevolent government.

V. How Better Will the New World Be?

Now, back to the larger world scene. In the wake of communism's collapse and the success of the American-led coalition in driving Iraq out of Kuwait, President George Bush proclaimed a "new world order." His noble aspiration recalls Carl L. Becker's prophetic book published in 1944, *How New Will the Better World Be?* Becker argued, convincingly in my view, that the postwar world would be more like the world before the war than different from it.

If the past is prologue, and it always is, the totalitarian thirst had not been quenched and new outlaw regimes and conflicts will continue to ravage the globe. After all, history is characterized more by continuity than by radical discontinuity. This is so because the raw stuff of history is human nature, and human nature has not fundamentally changed over the millennia.

Throughout history, human beings have doggedly resisted all efforts at drastic reconstruction. There have been and always will be evil men who resort to tyranny over their people or conquest over their neighbors to satisfy their appetite for power and dominion. They cannot be stopped by gentle persuasion, preaching, or United Nations resolutions. They can, however, be deterred or thrown back by humane power arrayed against them. Peace depends upon a precarious balance of power, hopefully with tamed governments holding the edge over expansionist tyrants.

All governments are prone to misuse their power, and they need the constraint of other powers to keep them in check. "If men were angels," argued James Madison in Federalist Paper 50, "perhaps we would need no government, but since they are not angels we not only need government, but governments with a separation of powers to protect society from the selfish ambitions of imperfect men." This is also an argument for democratic government. As Reinhold Niebuhr put it, "Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible; but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary."

A recognition of original sin and the need to curb the strong is even more crucial in world politics where predatory men are backed by military power—Hitler, Stalin, Mao. Aggressive governments would conquer other peoples if they were not deterred or thrown back by the power of other governments. During the Cold War, it was primarily American power that prevented the Soviet conquest of Western Europe. Hence, countervailing power, rightly exercised, is a force for peace and freedom. A balance of power is better than an imbalance of power.

The United States is the mightiest power on earth, but we are far from being omnipotent. We have a responsibility commensurate with our wealth and power. Without attempting to police the globe or put out every brushfire, America has an obligation to help strengthen peace and encourage freedom around the world. Sometimes we will succeed, and sometimes we will fail, but we must try.

Our chief asset, as President Bush demonstrated in the Persian Gulf, is our capacity to build coalitions with other governments with parallel interests, such as maintaining peace or throwing back an aggressor. To this end, we should maintain a strong North Atlantic Alliance, provide mutually beneficial support to key republics in the former USSR, foster openness in the People's Republic of China, and work with other states in dampening local conflicts.

VI. Limits of the United Nations

Despite recent events, or perhaps because of them, there is much confusion about the nature and role of the United Nations. The UN is several things: a symbol of the world we would like, a mechanism for coordinating humanitarian efforts, and a continuing conference of more than 180 members.

Its many functional agencies have coordinated scientific, technical, and humanitarian efforts—all of which could be carried out if there were no UN. In fact, some of the agencies existed before the UN was born. A bit of history may shed some light on the political and peacekeeping role of the United Nations.

Since Woodrow Wilson's "war to end all wars" and to "make the world safe for democracy," the dream of a League of Nations to internationalize world politics has had rough sled-

ding. How wrong the Wilsonian idealists were. The long weekend between Versailles and Pearl Harbor is littered with the whitened bones of failed expectations.

The World Court was powerless to resolve disputes and the Kellogg-Briand Pact to outlaw war was a joke. The league could not stop Mussolini or Hitler or prevent Japan from rearming. The symbols and machinery of international cooperation were tragically irrelevant as the world was wracked by tyranny, aggression, and civil conflict. The juggernaut of war rolled on.

Then came Hitler's annexation of Austria and finally his blitzkrieg against Poland. Two years later, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and plunged the United States into the bloodiest war in history.

The UN was duly established after the war, but high hopes for it were soon dashed by mounting evidence of Soviet expansion into Eastern Europe and beyond. Alas, power politics had not been abolished, nor had all states been tamed. Those in the grip of illusions became disillusioned.

The political UN, more precisely the Security Council, is not an *actor* in world politics. The Council is not a sovereign body and has no power or authority apart from that of its members. It is only an *instrument* to be used, abused, or ignored by its members. On the most consequential issues of war and peace in the past fifty years, the council was not even an instrument. The Security Council played no role in ending the Cold War or liberating Eastern Europe.

The fundamental reality is that legally sovereign states determine the fate of their citizens and the larger issues of peace and freedom. The key actors in the world drama are governments—acting alone, bilaterally, or, occasionally, through instruments like NATO or the Security Council.

The nominal UN command over the forces resisting North Korean aggression in the 1950s was made possible by the decisive action of President Truman and the temporary absence of the Soviet Union from the Security Council. The UN presence in the Gulf War was made possible by the common interest of the Western powers and Japan in assuring continued access to Middle Eastern oil. However, the council has been less than successful in dealing with the complex Serb-Bosnian and Somali conflicts.

The Security Council cannot *make* peace, and its peacekeeping role is severely limited. It can help keep peace only where there is a peace to keep and where the conflicting parties want it to serve in that capacity. It can *make* peace only when there is a supporting coalition of states powerful enough and willing to enforce their will on the aggressor—again as in the Gulf War.

My extensive research on the so-called UN peacekeeping force in the Congo in the 1960s concluded that the costly mission was counterproductive. By internationalizing a local crisis that threatened neither the Congo's independence nor any neighboring state, the UN intensified and prolonged the crisis. The crisis was sparked by the failure of Belgian officers to put down a mutiny by Congolese soldiers at a Léopoldville (now Kinshasa) barracks.

The four-year expeditionary force involved 93,000 men and officers from thirty-four governments, at its height numbering 20,000 troops. The operation cost was \$411 million, of which the United States paid 42 percent.

The financial, political, and moral cost of this less-than-successful mission stands in sharp contrast to the success and low cost of unilateral British intervention in Tanganyika (now Tanzania) in 1964. The situations in the two newly independent states were strikingly similar. When two battalions of Tanganyikan soldiers mutinied against their British officers, President Julius Nyerere — aware of the Congo disaster — asked London for help. Five hundred Royal Marine commandos were sent in from Aden. Order was quickly restored with the loss of only five men and a cost of a few thousand dollars.

Some contemporary Wilsonian idealists wrongly attribute intrinsic merit to multilateral action over unilateral action. Neither the effectiveness nor rightness of a policy inheres in the number of actors involved. All military actions from passive peacekeeping to armed intervention should be judged by the traditional just war criteria — just intention, just and proportional means, and just outcome. To judge the morality of any policy by the number of governments involved or by the imprimatur of the UN would fall prey to the maxim in Orwell's *Animal Farm*, "Two legs bad. Four legs good." It is the intent and consequences of political action that matter — not the instru-

ments through which the action takes place. There are good and bad unilateral policies and good and bad multilateral policies.

Columnist George Will, after surveying the Serbian carnage in Bosnia earlier this year, called the UN a “moral cipher which pretends to represent that political fiction called ‘the world community.’”

Those who point to the universality of the UN as a virtue should be reminded that there is a more universal political instrument at the disposal of any government in order to keep the peace or solve a conflict. I refer to international diplomacy, which includes all states, the overwhelming majority of whom have resident ambassadors in other state capitals.

In the Gulf crisis, President Bush used this time-tested instrument more than he did the Security Council. If no UN existed, Bush doubtless could have pulled together a working coalition just as readily. Because of certain political sensitivities, he believed that a Security Council sanction—or fig leaf, if you will—made it easier for some governments to come aboard.

For these and other reasons, it would be politically and morally irresponsible for any state to surrender its sovereignty or its interests to a majority vote of the Security Council. But, the council is there to provide a fig leaf for a propitious concurrence of state interests.

One should not be surprised if Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali exaggerates the potential influence of the organization he heads, even asserting that “peacekeeping is a UN invention.” He also calls for a standing UN peacekeeping (or peacemaking) force. This idea is impractical, expensive, and dangerous. As the Gulf crisis demonstrated, the necessary forces for multilateral military action should be provided by the states that believe that such action serves their interest.

The UN bureaucracy is one of the most bloated, inefficient, overpaid, and unsupervised bureaucracies in the world, according to studies by the UN’s largest contributor — the United States. Over the years, said Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, the U.S. government has unsuccessfully taken various measures “to deal with the waste, fraud, mismanagement, and sexism endemic in the UN system” (*Washington Post*, July 28, 1994). Why turn over to such a bureaucracy a standing military force, which, in any event, would be wholly dependent upon the legis-

tical assets of great powers. Presumably, such a force would be authorized to act only by the Security Council, but the temptation of the secretary-general to see himself as its commander would be a risk.

In sum, it would be difficult to prove that the world would be any more peaceful—or less peaceful—if there were no UN.

VII. Third World Problems

Turning to the Third World, the greatest threats to peace and security in Asia, Africa, and Latin America are internal. Nineteenth-century imperialism is a spent force. The states of Asia and Africa now have the sovereignty they had sought, and their destiny is largely in their own hands. To blame others for their troubles is an escape from responsibility.

In addition to ideology and tribalism, perhaps the third most serious barrier to economic and political development—and to regional stability—is the persistence of traditional cultures. These cultures are often characterized by an underdeveloped work ethic and an embryonic concept of delayed gratification. My firsthand observations in more than fifty Third World countries over the past forty-five years seems to confirm this controversial assessment, which, in any event, is held by many scholars.

In the wake of independence, many of the new political leaders were seduced by one version or another of Marxist ideology, emphasizing the distribution of goods and services over production. Cuba, Cambodia, and North Korea have been among the prime victims of this seduction. Now, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, Marx's view that history is determined primarily by economic forces and that socialism is the road to peace and plenty is almost universally discredited. There may be more Marxists on the Harvard faculty than in Eastern Europe.

The failure of centrally administered economies comes into sharp focus when measured against the spectacular success of South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore. These three Pacific tigers have not only developed prosperous market economies but are moving rapidly toward responsible and democratic governments as well. Their success, of course, is also due to cultural virtues such as a premium on learning and a strong work ethic.

VIII. Ideas Have Consequences

Ultimately, the quest for justice, human rights, and peace depends upon the character of the political culture and the world-view of its leaders, whether in Africa, Japan, Brazil, or the United States.

In 1948, Richard Weaver wrote a consequential book, *Ideas Have Consequences*. Indeed, ideas have moved history. The damage of mischievous ideas has been great and tenacious. The wreckage of Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, Bertrand Russell, and Jean-Paul Sartre still clutters the academic and political landscape.

Like dripping water, ideas work slowly. In contrast, crusading ideologies — grand concepts like communism or Nazism — often make a quick and usually disastrous impact on the world. Utopians, whether religious or secular, are *always* wrong. As, indeed, are doomsayers. Humans are precariously perched between utopia and hell, and this perch is the true arena of our aspiration and responsibility. Ideas about good and evil, right and wrong, have had greater consequences for human destiny than ideas about physics, mathematics, or geography. Hence, the motto of the Ethics and Public Policy Center that I established in 1976 is Values Have Consequences.

IX. The American Idea

The democratic West has drawn on many religious, philosophical, and cultural streams, culminating in what I might call the American idea. This idea and the society flowing from it have drawn respect, admiration, and immigrants from all parts of the world. If they had a choice and if it were physically possible, billions of people would migrate to the United States.

The American idea is anchored in the Judeo-Christian respect for every human being as a child of God and in the political experience of the West that stems from it — Roman law, the Magna Carta, the Mayflower Compact, and the Declaration of Independence.

The American idea is a commitment and a promise, not an airy abstraction or an ideology. An ideology is a partial and warped political theory contrived to manipulate people rather

than to serve them. Ideologies are usually utopian and promise an earthly paradise: *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, a classless society—grand goals beyond the capacity of any government to fulfill.

All utopians are ultimately cynics, lofty critics who disdain modest goals and the grubby struggle to achieve them. The exalted proclamations of the French Revolution were quickly snuffed out in the terror of a fierce class struggle. Nazism and Marxism—the two chief barbarisms to plague this century—were driven by even more vicious ideologies. Each of these three revolutions contemptuously rejected the Judeo-Christian heritage.

In contrast, the American idea is grounded in this heritage with its unsentimental understanding of human nature and history. Although not utopian, it does have a transcendent vision—“the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God”—which provides both a moral compass and a social contract between the people and their government. The American idea, grounded in ethical monotheism and our rich Western patrimony, wisely includes constitutional checks to curb tyranny and punish evildoers.

The Founding Fathers had somewhat different views on the role of virtue in America’s origin. Jefferson, for example, saw the new nation as innocent, purged of old-world vices, while Madison emphasized the reality and tenacity of original sin in the human drama. Madison was right; America was never innocent. Nor was America conceived in sin and brought forth in iniquity.

The American idea is both noble and realistic—one of man’s highest achievements. As Alexis de Tocqueville put it, “America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.” Our government is rooted in justice and the rule of law precisely because of man’s propensity to do evil. Dwelling on notions of a pure Arcadian past tends to subvert the discipline essential to reaching more immediate goals.

Central to the American idea is the notion that government must be curbed by a separation of powers and by active participation of the people in selecting its leaders.

In an 1821 letter to John Adams, Jefferson was optimistic about the future of America, writing, “Should the cloud of barbarism and despotism again obscure the science and libraries of Europe, this country remains to preserve and restore light and

liberty to them." Four decades later, the brooding Civil War president was not at all certain that this nation under God would endure, but he fought with all his powers to save it.

It is not the duty of Americans to impose these ideas or our system on other peoples. We hope that others might emulate our virtues and reject our vices. As John Quincy Adams put it, America "is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own." Yet we can and should quietly nudge amenable regimes, particularly allies and "neutrals," into more peaceful and humane ways.

Fortunately for world peace, the major powers — America, Japan, Germany, Britain, and France—are not bewitched by ideology. Their policies are motivated by enlightened self-interest and rooted largely in a live-and-let-live approach.

To a remarkable extent, Washington's policies since the end of World War II have demonstrated a live-and-help-live attitude. This is illustrated by our substantial assistance to rebuild former enemies such as Germany, Japan, and, more recently, Russia, and, of course, by the Gulf War and our support for stability and development in the Third World, to say nothing of our humanitarian aid in all parts of the world.

Our policies have not been without flaws. Sometimes our good intentions, as in Vietnam, have been subverted by miscalculations and failure of will. But, as Lincoln once said, "No man is good enough to be president, but someone has to be." To which I would say, "No country is good enough to bear the burdens we must bear, but we have no honorable way out."