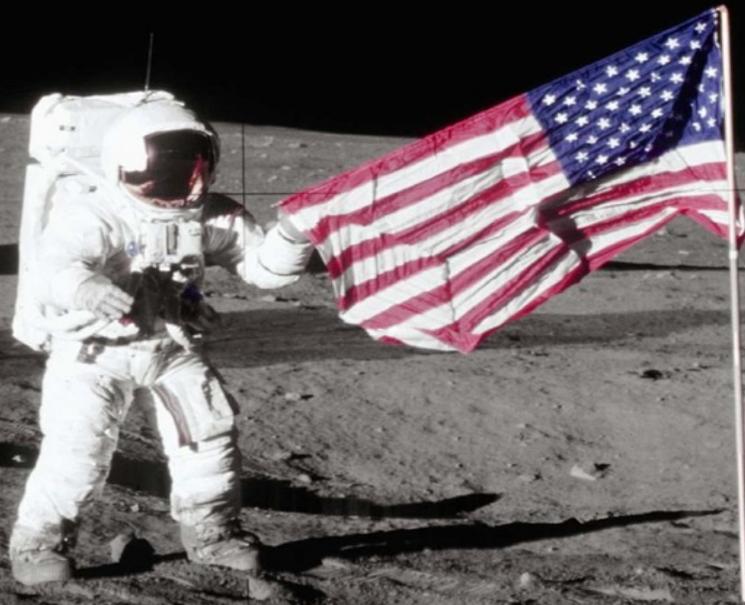


A  
PATRIOT'S  
HISTORY<sup>®</sup>  
OF THE  
MODERN WORLD  
VOL. II



FROM THE COLD WAR TO THE AGE OF  
ENTITLEMENT, 1945—2012

LARRY SCHWEIKART  
*Coauthor of *A Patriot's History of the United States**  
AND DAVE DOUGHERTY

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A Patriot's History<sup>®</sup>  
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From the Cold War to the  
Age of Entitlement: 1945–2012

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Version\_1

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To Eunice May Schweikart Chandler (1919–2013),  
who adopted me, then treated me as her own.

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## INTRODUCTION

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It could have been a postwar American town or the Farmer's Market in Los Angeles. Busy streets served as the setting for a bustling vegetable market, teeming with customers, awash in produce—rich bounty spread out over hundreds of stands. As far as one could see, makeshift shops in the open air stretched down the street—in post-World War II Romania. Communism, in the early 1950s, still had not gained total control of the Romanian market, and farmers came from the countryside to sell their goods. A young Romanian, Gabriel Bohm, walked through the marketplace with his mother in awe of the cornucopia of fruits and vegetables, displayed under homemade tents or on crates by ordinary farmers. Bohm remembered seeing a market “full of merchandise . . . good looking, healthy stuff.” Yet within twenty years, Bohm witnessed a dramatic change. The same scene in 1965 would be much different: empty streets, devoid of vendors, patrolled by police. “Those markets were deserted,” he recalled years later: “not a single carrot, not a single vendor selling a carrot.”

There were other changes as well, ending many of the mainstays of life. Churches were closed, political gatherings banned. What had happened in the interim to Bohm and other Romanians? Communism took full control of the economy. “We saw the country deteriorate,” he noted. “Anyone who could get out would. You had to be brain dead not to get out.”<sup>1</sup> Yet they could not get out. Nor could their neighbors in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, or East Germany, all of them trapped as prisoners of the Soviet Union, which since 1945 had embarked on a program of expansionism dictated by Soviet communism's godfather, Vladimir Lenin. Nor were the scenes of want and desperation in those Communist-controlled countries different in any of the other Eastern European nations that could be observed—Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland—and often they were worse.

East Germans lived in constant fear of the Stasi, the state's secret police, which recruited informants and compiled dossiers on almost every citizen to crush any potential opposition to the state. Even so much as an anti-Communist cartoon or joke was sufficient grounds for jail. One East Berliner who escaped to West Germany discovered decades later, after communism's collapse, that one of her best friends had informed on her to the Stasi. Everywhere in the Iron Curtain countries (as they were labeled by Winston Churchill in 1946), the state spied on average citizens. Even children were tricked into informing on parents. Bulgarians knew that people simply disappeared—but they did not know that a secret prison island, kept off official maps, was their ultimate destination.

An atmosphere of discontent and fear permeated the Communist bloc. After a time, the fear and depression produced a numbing absence of vitality. Western visitors to Eastern Europe at this time all came back with the same impression of the visual images that awaited them there: “gray,” “it was grime, gray,” “all gray,” they said.<sup>2</sup> Millions of people were prisoners in their own countries, unable to leave and usually afraid to resist.

A stunning contrast could be seen, literally, across borders where Western European nations thrived after 1945. Even Germany, crushed into rubble, with up to 10 percent of its 1939 population killed or wounded in the war, staged an astonishing revival after VE Day.<sup>3</sup> The success could be attributed to the massive humanitarian and economic assistance provided by the United States, the

adoption (even in quasi-socialist countries such as France, Italy, and Greece) of markets and price mechanisms, and the determination of Europeans themselves to recover from war yet again.

But Western Europe would soon drift into a lethargy of planned economies at the very time that a cold war was being waged to free Eastern Europe from those very ideas. By the time the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, the West had lost or deliberately given up many of the freedoms that the East had sought and just gained. And within another decade still, the advent of the European Union would subtly and quietly impose controls on ordinary life that, while wrapped in a velvet glove, felt to some like the iron fist they had resisted.

Worse still, Europe was not alone. From 1945 to 1970, virtually all of the then-labeled Third World, including Africa, Asia, and Latin America, embraced state planning and rejected markets. Many of the European colonies (Uganda, Congo, Rwanda), winning their freedom in the postwar division of the world, immediately put dictators in power who squelched talk of republics and democracy. By the 1970s, postwar optimism had been replaced by widespread anger and desperation, with one set of masters exchanged for another.

None of this was supposed to have happened. Just as in the post-World War I era, the end of war was to have meant a golden age of freedom and equality. Unlike after World War I, however, this time there was little doubt in non-Communist countries that the United States was in charge of the postwar world. Emerging from the war with its homeland and domestic industries not only entirely intact, but cranked up to full production, American productivity exceeded the wildest expectations of the Truman administration. Racing to shore up Europe from 1947 to 1950, the United States introduced the Marshall Plan, aiding war-torn Europe without asking for anything in return. Understanding the Soviet threat to the rest of Europe, America created a new alliance system and took virtually all of the major Western European nations under its protection.

As much as America was to be the leader and role model in this new era, all the efforts of U.S. occupation forces and all the money delivered by foreign aid could not address the fundamental weakness of postwar development efforts. The salient point of the post-World War II period was that by 1957 no nation had adopted the four pillars that made American exceptionalism successful in the first place. As developed in the first volume of this history, those pillars consisted of a Christian (mostly Protestant) religious foundation, free enterprise, common law, and private property with title and deeds. Missing even in postwar Europe, these features were almost totally unknown throughout the rest of the world. Long-established nations such as France and Italy seemed little different from emerging states such as Uganda or Cameroon, or the reconstructed countries of Germany or Japan.

Thus, another thirty years later—by 2000—the promise of global liberty that appeared so imminent in 1946 seemed to have slipped away to a significant degree almost everywhere. Drone spy technology monitored the movements of ordinary citizens; big-city mayors banned not only guns, but also soft drinks and fats and plastic bags; European cities saw “no-go” zones of Muslims abolish Western law and replace it with Sharia; countries published lists of children’s names that were permitted and not permitted; street preaching was banned, and pastors jailed for speaking the Gospel aloud in churches. That these liberty-limiting developments occurred in African or Asian nations hardly raised an eyebrow—so far had many of those countries fallen after 1945—but that they all occurred in the United States or Europe seemed a shocking and stunning reversal of the very reasons the “Good War” had been fought in the first place.

Why had this subtle but dangerous reversal occurred so rapidly and so unexpectedly (to some)? Indeed, what were “democracies” doing engaging in such practices at all? In fact, all along the promise of postwar liberty itself was illusory, constructed on the premise that most of the world would

be rebuilt along the lines of American-style democracy and freedoms. Our argument is that without the four pillars of American exceptionalism, such developments were not only likely, they were inevitable. Moreover, we argue that Europeans' use of terms such as "democracy," "republic," and even "liberty" were not the same as those understood by Americans, and therefore other nations never entertained any intention of adopting the American pillars. In our previous volume of *A Patriot's History of the Modern World: From America's Exceptional Ascent to the Atomic Bomb*, we reviewed the impact of common law, a Christian (mostly Protestant) religious culture, access to private property (including ownership with easy acquisition of deeds and titles), and free-market capitalism, which brought America to the forefront of world power by the end of the war. Instead of copying American success, victorious or liberated nations more often sought only to dip their toes in the water of freedom, adopting free markets without common law or restricting capitalism, permitting Christian religion but steadily edging away from acknowledging the Christian foundations of society, paying lip service to private property without instituting the land-ownership institutions, such as titles and deeds that are necessary to make it a reality. More often still, nations ignored all four of the pillars. Thus, the American model was only implemented piecemeal, where implemented at all (South Korea, for example). As we pointed out in volume 1, while any one of the pillars might be beneficial to a society, without all four no true American-style republic could be developed. The pillars were simply mutually dependent.

This volume continues the story of America's rise to world dominance through three themes. First, we trace the battle that began early in the twentieth century between the Progressives and the Constitutionalists. The former, grounded in the "reform" movement of the late 1800s, sought to perfect man and society by a process of government-directed and controlled change. The Progressives wanted to deemphasize the Constitution as it was written, and with it, American exceptionalism. They conducted a century-long assault on the notion that the United States had any providential founding, that its heroes and heroines were particularly wise, just, or courageous. By insisting that laws needed to be continually reassessed in light of current morality, Progressives saw the Constitution as outdated or irrelevant. Constitutionalists, on the other hand, maintained that America's founding stemmed from her Christian roots, and that the Declaration of Independence and Constitution were representative of common law doctrines in which codes of conduct, given by God to the people, bubbled up, supported and promoted by the people (as opposed to being handed to a king or ruler to be dispensed downward). Moreover, Constitutionalists maintained that the Founding Fathers were, in fact, wise and visionary, and that they established a framework of laws that addressed every eventuality. Progressives enacted a legislative campaign to regulate markets, redistribute wealth, and limit private property ownership. Constitutionalists wanted to free markets, enable all to pursue wealth, and restrain government's ability to infringe upon individuals' property rights. Finally, the Progressives—many of whom, in the early stages of the movement, were nominal Christians—fiercely labored to remove Christianity from the public square, from all political discourse, and from entertainment. Indeed, Christianity stood in the way of implementing most of their reforms. Constitutionalists, of course, understood the admonitions of the Founders, who urged that the nation adhere to its Christian roots and above all pursue virtue.

Over the course of the second half of the twentieth century and the first decade of the next, American exceptionalism faced hostility abroad, but more surprisingly, antipathy by numerous groups at home. The Progressive Left endeavored through the educational system, the law, and entertainment to denigrate and ridicule the very concept that America had anything special to offer, and to insist that the United States had become just one nation among many. That a number of Western and non-

Western powers arose to challenge American dominance was to be expected, particularly when the American public had so generously provided the financial and commercial means of their recovery in many cases. Germany and Japan took the best of the American industrial, manufacturing, and management practices, modified them, and implemented them with zeal, producing world-class automobiles, electronics, robotics, and a host of other products that drove American goods either full or partially from the market. Once several nations could claim economic proximity to the United States (though none could claim parity), were not their systems, goals, practices, and cultures worthy of emulation as well? But the Progressive assault did not stop there: it insisted that undeveloped cultures were no worse than ours, only different. Americans were urged to seek out the value in what in previous generations would have been termed “backward” cultures, and to “understand” practices once deemed undesirable at best or barbaric at worse. President Barack Obama’s 2009 Cairo speech, as one example, cited advances and greatness in Islamic culture that never existed, implying that Americans needed to be more like Egypt rather than Egyptians being more like Americans.<sup>4</sup> Absurdly saying that “Islam has always been a part of America’s story,” Obama claimed that Islam “pav[ed] the way for Europe’s Renaissance” and gave us “cherished music,” the “magnetic compass and tools of navigation,” and furthered “our understanding of how disease spreads and how it can be healed.”<sup>5</sup> Although his intention may have been to strike new chords of friendship, the act of ascribing to people accomplishments they never achieved looked phony and, according to polls in the subsequent three years, had no effect on Muslim views of America.

By 2012, the culmination of this Progressive march saw the United States elect a president with little or no understanding of free market capitalism, no appreciation of private property rights, little demonstrable Christian religious influence (to the point that by 2012 polls showed that up to half of the American public thought he was a Muslim), and an apparent disdain for American exceptionalism. Barack Obama repeatedly apologized to foreign nations for past American “mistakes” or transgressions and denigrated (or greatly mischaracterized) American exceptionalism by insisting that “the Brits believe in British exceptionalism and the Greeks believe in Greek exceptionalism.” As the British magazine *The Economist* stated, Americans had put into power “a left-wing president who has regulated to death a private sector he neither likes nor understands. . . .”<sup>6</sup> In 2008, in his famous “Joe the Plumber” comment, Obama stated that it was government’s duty to “spread the wealth around,” and in 2012, referring to private businesses that had become successful, he said, “You didn’t build the [business]. . . . Somebody else made that happen.” That “somebody else” was, of course, government—not the private sector. Comments such as those showed Obama had no concept of what made markets work. Likewise, in his bailout of General Motors, he demonstrated that he had no regard for private property—in that case, the property of the bondholders who were saddled with an enormous loss to protect union pensions.

Obama’s national health care law forced the Catholic Church to compromise on its core religious beliefs regarding conception. His Supreme Court appointments routinely interpreted the American Constitution in the light of international law. And when it came to private property, Obama continued to implement the United Nations’ antigrowth/anticapitalist Agenda 21 initiatives, which were inserting themselves into all aspects of American life.

Of course, some of the erosion had already occurred. Fearing Islamic terrorists, after 9/11 Americans readily assented to substantial limitations on their freedoms, from airport body searches to cameras on stoplights. Once necessary Patriot Act precautions had grossly expanded with new computerized surveillance and monitoring technologies, including “latch-on” phone tapping, air drone camera planes, and listening devices, to the point that virtually anyone could be found by the national

government. Benjamin Franklin’s comment, “They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety,” looked more prescient all the time. Worse still, by 2012, few politicians anywhere were seeking to limit such powers, let alone roll them back.

The exceptionalism that had saved the world had not met a receptive audience, even if at first the rhetoric and spirit were wildly embraced. Quite the contrary, it seemed that to some extent, Europe insisted on revisiting post–World War I practices yet again, and certainly in the former colonies the delusion of creating new “democratic” states without at least some of the pillars of American exceptionalism proved especially vexing. Yet the record of such efforts seemed abundantly clear by 1946. Europeans, after all, had witnessed the full-blown collapse of their societies not once in the first half of the twentieth century but twice. They had likewise seen the manifest failure and folly of both variations of socialism—fascism and communism.

From 1917 to 1989, neither outright government ownership under Soviet-style communism nor ownership-by-proxy through German/Italian fascism provided material prosperity or human dignity. Indeed, both heaped unparalleled inhumanity on top of astronomical levels of state-sanctioned killing. According to R. J. Rummel, perhaps the leading authority on government murder, the top governments in terms of democide (the murder of a person or people by a government including genocide, politicide, mass murder, and deaths arising from the reckless and depraved disregard for life, but excluding abortion deaths and battle deaths in war) from 1900 through 1987 were:

Country	Deaths	Years	Type of Government
Soviet Union	61,911,000	1917–1987	Communist
Communist China (PRC)	35,236,000	1949–1987	Communist
Nazi Germany	20,946,000	1933–1945	Fascist
Nationalist China	10,214,000	1928–1949	Militaristic/Fascist
Imperial Japan	5,964,000	1936–1945	Militaristic/Fascist
China (Mao’s Soviets)	3,466,000	1923–1949	Communist
Khmer Rouge Cambodia	2,035,000	1975–1979	Communist
Turkey (Young Turks)	1,883,000	1909–1918	Militaristic
Vietnam	1,670,000	1945–1987	Communist
North Korea	1,663,000	1948–1987	Communist
Poland	1,585,000	1945–1948	Communist
Pakistan	1,503,000	1958–1987	Authoritarian
Mexico	1,417,000	1900–1920	Authoritarian
Communist Yugoslavia	1,072,000	1944–1987	Communist
Czarist Russia	1,066,000	1900–1917	Authoritarian
China (Warlords)	910,000	1917–1949	Authoritarian
Turkey (Atatürk)	878,000	1919–1923	Authoritarian
United Kingdom	816,000	1900–1987	Democracy
Portugal	741,000	1926–1982	Authoritarian
Indonesia	729,000	1965–1987	Authoritarian <sup>7</sup>

The only democracy on the list, Great Britain, attained its numbers only during the course of World War I and World War II through the economic blockade of the Central Powers and bombing of

German cities. Even Rummel's chart is somewhat misleading, however, in that if one looks at democide as a percentage of a country's total population, still other nondemocratic regimes top the list, including Cambodia under Pol Pot, Turkey under Kemal Atatürk, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Mexico, Uganda, Romania, and Mongolia.

It is a mockery of honest statistics to claim that the United States by these measures is in any way a "violent nation" (6,000 deaths from intergroup or collective violence from 1900 to 1987), and its residence at nearly the bottom of Rummel's list reflected the fact that by this standard alone, America was truly exceptional. But the point stands that by far the most deadly ideological systems were the Communist, fascist, and authoritarian systems tested on multiple occasions by the Europeans and exported to their colonial cousins. A quite contrary point emerges, namely that only when the fundamental elements of the American foundation are applied can a nation routinely protect its citizens from such murder.

Europe's global failure to maintain peace, stability, and human rights over the course of over one hundred years—even with relatively free markets and democratic governments—points out the essential symbiosis of the American pillars. The United States of America had largely avoided anything approaching such carnage by government. She did so not because of any one of the four legs of exceptionalism, but because all four worked together. That began to change in the postwar era as Progressives accelerated their attacks on these pillars.

Their central target was America's Christian roots, and the Progressives had help from intellectuals, elites, and even the Supreme Court. After the war, pressure from humanism, statism, and communism pushed religion further into disfavor—especially among elites. John Dewey, the so-called father of American progressive education, had already penetrated the schools with a covert war on faith. His goal was nothing less than full secularization and humanization of American education. Then in 1947 the groundbreaking Supreme Court ruling in *Everson v. Board of Education of the Township of Ewing* seemed to separate religion from all government in all cases, effectively changing the First Amendment's intent from protecting religion from the government to protecting government from religion. Despite massive revival appeal by preachers such as Billy Graham in the 1950s and 1960s, media elites instituted a guerrilla campaign against religion, highlighted by the infamous 1966 *Time* magazine cover announcing "God Is Dead." Sheer numbers of people disproved such a silly assertion, of course, as evangelical church rolls continued to grow, but Christianity was already being successfully branded as a "crutch" for the uneducated, the rubes, and the slow-witted. Increasingly, Christians were made to feel out of touch and isolated, when in fact their faith remained the majority view. Depending on how one asked the question in a poll, between 60 and 90 percent of Americans still considered themselves Christian by 1970.

Television, although more slowly, soon added to the assault on religion. At first, television shows depicted generic ministers (with their collars) as genial problem solvers—as opposed to serious moral teachers—but by the mid-1970s clergy were increasingly portrayed as crooks or buffoons, or, even worse, as hypocrites. For the media, the church, ministers, and Christianity had ceased to exist except when a plot line needed a convenient villain or comedic foil. For example, a 2012 ABC show originally called *Good Christian Bitches* provoked such an uproar that ABC had to change the title to *Good Christian Belles*—but still advertised it with a blonde in a miniskirt choir robe. Movies such as *Monsignor* (1982), *Agnes of God* (1985), and any number of horror films portrayed clerics and nuns as depraved, conniving, or utterly powerless. (Hollywood did begin to change slightly after 2000, when the market for Christian and/or Christian-friendly films was demonstrated to be a sure money maker by Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* (2004) and by *Facing the Giants*, an extremely low-budget

movie made essentially by amateurs from Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Georgia, and earning ten times its budget.)

But the ridicule had its effect on church attendance. By the late 1990s, in a desperate effort to recapture members and prove themselves relevant, American mainline Protestant churches underwent a revolution that saw them open coffee bars, establish date nights, provide sports leagues, and introduce modern music, all to little or no effect in raising total numbers. Quite the contrary; as the mainline Protestant denominations liberalized and adopted moral relativism, their believers fled to other churches, including the Catholic Church, that professed stricter doctrines and adherence to God's law and absolute moral teachings. Megachurches rose rapidly, their converts generally consisting of "churched" people who had stopped going to their original mainline denominational gathering. In 1900 Christians represented fully 96.4 percent of all Americans, and 46.1 percent were members of Protestant churches. In 2000, the numbers had fallen to 84.7 and 23.2 percent respectively. By 2025, it is expected to drop further to 80.3 and 21.2 percent.<sup>8</sup> However, evangelicals increased to 14.6 percent of the church membership by 2000, or 50 percent more than the mainline churches.

Of all the pillars of American exceptionalism, none would erode more during the time covered by this volume than the moral foundation provided by Christianity, and especially Protestant Christianity. But the steady debasement of American Christian morality and the underpinning of American democracy were not by-products of the Progressive agenda. They *were* the Progressive agenda. Moral relativism, as taught in American schools, universities, and recently, mainline Protestant churches, asserts that morality is not based on any absolute standard but depends on variables such as individual feelings, backgrounds, culture, specific situations, polls, and various opinions. "Truth" itself is relative depending on one's viewpoint. This can best be seen in generational attitudes toward marriage between homosexuals. In a Pew Research poll in 2012, only 36 percent of Americans born before 1945 favored same-sex marriage, but those born after 1980 favored it by 63 percent.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, most churches have all but given up on the issue of divorce, and quietly seek to manage it rather than prevent it. And the Catholic Church, despite remaining firm in its opposition to artificial birth control, seems to have fought a losing battle. By 2011, almost 70 percent of Catholic women used some form of birth control.<sup>10</sup>

While much of Europe (and the rest of the world) was not Protestant, the Catholic Church might have substituted as one of the pillars outside America. But Catholicism suffered from other problems than its positions on social issues. Worldwide it had been late coming to the table of republicanism and the Church had been on the wrong side in the Dreyfus affair in France. Not until the 1920s did the Vatican finally permit Italian Catholics to form a political party and take an active part in the pseudo-democratic government. The Vatican had supported the Nationalist/anti-Republican forces in the Spanish Civil War, then the Third Reich because of its opposition to communism, losing substantial credibility as a bastion against evil. By the end of World War II, then, the Catholic Church—along with many of the German Protestant churches—had ceded any moral authority it had when the century began.

By 1946, most emerging nations had absorbed the ideological structures and religious attitudes that had failed their former colonial masters simply because that's what they had been taught. India, for example, warmly embraced Keynesian state planning; Egypt adopted a variant of state socialism; and one African nation after another imposed high levels of government regulation on top of considerable degrees of outright state ownership of the "commanding heights" of industry. Virtually none—not even prostrate Japan—tried to recreate the American experience or erect the four pillars of

exceptionalism. Where adopting Protestant Christianity might have proved impossible, a religion that could not be easily manipulated by the state, as Shinto was by the Japanese in the 1930s, proved the second best option. Nevertheless, when evaluating their situation at the end of World War II, Japan and most newly decolonized states did not even consider examining Christian principles as possibly being an important element in their future recovery. Christian missionaries had made little headway in Japan, with its strongly Shinto and Buddhist population, and after 1932, Shintoism was melded with the state and any other religion discouraged by the government. Japan and other (at the time) Third World nations thereby also cavalierly ignored common law in that they had no history of government emanating from the people and, without Christianity, no religious structure that would encourage democracy. Likewise, outside of Europe, private property ownership tied to deeds and legal documents was rare, mainly due to the long-standing traditions of personal honor that obviated the (apparent) need for such paperwork. While Japan managed a miraculous recovery and implemented a democratic political system, weaknesses stemming from the missing exceptional elements soon brought Japan's rapid rise to a halt, cresting in the late 1980s. Japan's decline started immediately thereafter, producing two decades of stagnation and the onset of a national malaise.

Indeed, Christianity worked hand-in-glove with free markets, and while capitalism and commerce certainly were not impossible without Christianity, the absence of the religion tended to result in commerce that was heavily regulated by government, as government picked and chose industries and corporations to receive support. Europeans, of course, still worked and innovated, but from about 1970 through 2000, excluding the Communist states, the European continent did not add a single net new job while the United States added more than 20 million net new jobs.<sup>11</sup> Even after a short setback with the dot-com bust, then after suffering through the economic impact of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the American economy revived to produce an additional 6 million jobs under George W. Bush before the 2007 mortgage industry collapse. Meanwhile, the average workweek in Europe continued to decline and deficits mounted; by 2010, many members of the European Union teetered on bankruptcy, relying solely on the strength of Germany and its loans to keep them afloat. All Europe seemed to assume that German war guilt for World War II would provide for the citizens of the victimized nations what they could not provide for themselves. But sixty-five years was a long time, and by 2010, Germans were clamoring for France and the other nations to assume some responsibility for their own welfare. Greece, Spain, Ireland, Portugal, and Italy all faced unsustainable debt levels due to their social welfare policies. France was little better off, and the 2012 elections in France even installed a socialist prime minister who lowered the retirement age. All of this reduced the incentive for individuals to care for themselves and their families, and replaced both God and the family with the state. Virtually every aspect of life—from child-care subsidies to education grants to housing vouchers to retirement—were all provided (poorly) by government.

Without common law—which was lost by the few European states that ever had it—and without limits on what private property governments could seize, the European free market became increasingly more restricted between 1945 and 2012. China, in contrast, moved in the other direction. She saw her weaknesses under communism exposed by tiny Hong Kong, to the point that even before the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping pragmatically had tried to meld capitalism and a Marxist political system, noting, “It doesn't matter whether a cat is white or black, as long as it catches mice.” With this admission that China would permit a price system to operate “as long as it caught mice,” communism in its pure state was doomed in China. Instead of fully adopting all the American pillars, however, China floundered with a mixed economy moving in the direction of state capitalism, lacking common law and a free political system.

Yet China had one advantage that even Japan and Europe lacked: her Protestant Christian population was rapidly growing, providing a basis for a movement that could, conceivably, transform China from the inside in the decades to come. Indeed, in sheer numbers China had become one of the larger Christian countries, with more than 89 million Christians in 2000.<sup>12</sup> That number represented an increase from 1.7 million in 1900, and is expected to reach more than 135 million by 2025 (though as a percentage of its population, Christianity remains a minority). Did that mean that China was the world's next superpower? Not at all, for the absence of common law and private ownership of property meant that China—like Europe—would struggle with the political aspects of liberty and be fundamentally unable to hear the voice of the people when they spoke.

Liberty continued to be advanced in China and everywhere else by the continued application of some of the American pillars, despite Europe's slow retreat from them. The pressure from the productive power of the American economy opened otherwise closed societies to a willingness to examine American values. For forty-five years after World War II, the American invention/innovation machine had produced a level of wealth and prosperity unseen before in human history. This technological stampede culminated in the early twenty-first century with a communications revolution exceeding that of Gutenberg's printing press. Much more than the effect of the printing press in the 1400s, the new telecommunications explosion mitigated the ability of any society to restrict freedom. While still not powerful enough to entirely prevent such abuses, the communications technology often transmitted the news (and video) of government oppression instantaneously. At worst, this could embarrass the violator, and at best, so publicize abuses that restrictions were lifted or individuals permitted to leave their abusive country. Footage of Tiananmen Square, with its lone protester standing defiantly in front of a tank, did not bring about instantaneous change, but over time was a contributory factor in China's (still wanting) liberalization.

But technology and the rise of electronic entertainment also had other, less desirable effects on the modern world, fracturing the social fabric by, ironically, reducing genuine communication between people. Cell phones, personal computers, and the rise of social network Web sites such as Facebook and Myspace dramatically reduced the membership not only in churches, but in virtually all social organizations. In America, this meant a dwindling membership in such organizations as the Elks, Kiwanis, Rotary, Eastern Star, Masons, and Shriners, as well as dealing a severe blow to group activities such as bowling, picnics, and parades.

Elsewhere, in Japan and Korea, for example, young adults either fully embraced the communication and entertainment revolutions—with their demand for products literally driving much of the new market—or, in some cases, completely withdrew from society in unique and troubling new ways. But whether in an American shopping mall or a Tokyo street or a Dutch coffeehouse, particularly after the advent of cellular telephones and texting, it was not unusual to see a gathering of several teens or even adults where not one but all would be engaged in some communication with someone elsewhere, and none talking with those immediately present. For American nuclear and extended families, this shattered their cohesion. For Asians, with their strong (but weakening) structures of familial honor, the youth retreated inward, convinced that their futures were dim. Such trends were not true of all, of course, but were increasingly common as the fracturing of social bonds gained momentum and the realities of decaying economies set in. A somewhat odder circumstance developed in Europe, where parents reported spending more time with their children, but not always for positive reasons. Studies of European teens—whose family divorce rate had doubled since the 1970s—found anxiety and depression had increased 100 percent from thirty years earlier, although that rate hit a plateau in 2004. Those same European teens shifted heavily from work to education,

with work levels falling by half since the 1980s and the number of youth in education more than doubling. Essentially, European young people quit working and began to mill about colleges and universities.<sup>13</sup> But, like Americans, European young people seldom participated in organizations (only 20 percent according to one study), and movie attendance was more popular in Europe than in America (82 percent of European young people routinely went to movies).<sup>14</sup> Families saw their cohesion shattered as conversation in households disappeared and family members each went their own ways as ready access to the outside world and its influences opened up.

This atomization became readily seen in not only communications but also television viewing (with its hundreds of channels), music listening (with *USA Today* compiling no fewer than a half dozen different “top 40s”), and publishing (with *The New York Times* featuring a dozen bestseller lists by genre). In short, the wealth and prosperity of the United States in the postwar years had resulted in the shattering of community—sometimes for the good (no one doubts that social nosiness was a problem in previous decades), but usually for the worse. This was especially true with the American white middle class, where American sociologist Charles Murray noted that the number one television show in 1963–64 was *The Beverly Hillbillies* with a Nielsen share of 39.1 percent, meaning that almost 40 percent of all American TV viewers watched the show. (In contrast, the number one show in the United States in 2004 was *American Idol*, whose Nielsen share was less than one third that!) The demise of such shared cultural touchstones could not be underestimated.

A similar diversification occurred with news, which at one time had played a role of uniting people around a few daily event narratives, usually nonpoliticized. By the 1970s, however, the major networks and large city newspapers, plus major magazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek*, had tilted decidedly to the left and had politicized everything from proper diets to the weather. Their tilt would continue steadily, until they were virtually horizontal, and little more than mouthpieces for Progressive politicians by the turn of the century. In response, numerous alternative media began to arise, and became exceedingly popular—talk radio, alternative newspapers, then later, Internet sources such as the Drudge Report and the new television network Fox News. Once the major media conglomerates lost their monopoly power as alternative news media and other news sources became widely available to everyone, a new competition for news arose that hadn’t been seen in the United States since before the Civil War.

Variety was a good thing, but it came at a steep price, for the youth—now hearing from both sides that the other was always wrong—reverted to cynicism and detachment from the political process. In addition, much of the information available on the Internet was simply incorrect, whether by design or ignorance, but it often masqueraded as “news.” Given the blurring of traditional news into political opinion, it became increasingly difficult to rely on either as an ultimate source of facts. Misinformation was rampant and spread rapidly. (For example, in an analysis made by one of the authors in 2010, more than sixty sites, including blogs, stated that Thomas Jefferson had used the phrase “wall of separation” between church and state twice. In fact, only three debunked the second citation—showing Jefferson’s letter to Virginia Baptists in 1808 having the phrase added later by editor Eyler Coates in a lead-in paragraph to his discussion of Jefferson and freedom of religion.<sup>15</sup>) At the same time, however, the penetration of Western, and especially American, news and media into virtually all of the world became a force for opening closed societies to an alternative view that oppressive governments found nearly impossible to stop.

Yet instead of spreading American exceptionalism—and a road map for nations still struggling to succeed materially and culturally—the new message of unfettered freedom and sexual liberation was the one often seen and heard by other countries. They failed to appreciate the three hundred years of

training and discipline in individual liberty that came through property ownership and common law, which (like religion) stood as barriers to tyranny and constrained individual excesses. In the United States, state and local governments, each of which had delineated powers and as late as 2012 still retained considerable autonomy (U.S. states actually retained more sovereignty than nations in the European Union), frequently prevented abuses by the national government. Intervening cultural, social, religious, and political barriers to tyranny (including states' rights and federalism) served as a powerful—but increasingly diminishing—buffer to the highly centralized state. Where were such barriers in other societies? Some of Africa, still dominated by tribalism, found that the tribes merely grafted themselves onto the state and manipulated it. Otherwise, where were any intermediary or intervening institutions in China? Iran? Or even most states within the European Union? Instead of observing American success and letting it serve as a beacon, most states had steadily moved toward greater centralization, observing fewer individual rights and eroding the power of nongovernmental institutions such as family and church.

It was the American pillar of common law that had manifested the other three pillars in the political world. Through the evolution of common law, American politics had developed over more than two centuries a unique electoral system that mitigated against tyranny and extremism—but which no one else adopted. First, the electoral college itself demands that every four years presidential candidates must address the issues of the heartland with some degree of seriousness. No candidate can write off the swath of states that runs from Ohio through Missouri to Nevada. In the 2000 election, these were called “red” states (for Republicans, versus “blue” states for Democrats, which hugged the coasts). Europe has no such electoral protection for the large majority of its nonelites. Second, the common law that undergirds the entire U.S. structure assumes that all the people are imbued with a sense of political understanding and are the source of all power, as exemplified by the Arkansas state motto, “The People Rule.” The U.S. Constitution begins with “We the People” whereas, for example, the Treaty of Lisbon, looked upon as the constitution of the European Union, begins, “His Majesty the King of the Belgians, The President of the Republic of Bulgaria . . .” Of course, the rise of the so-called low-information voter and citizen apathy challenges this notion that the population as a whole features a solid sense of political understanding.

Third, American politics since the 1820s has accepted the “winner-take-all/single-member-district” system, whereby the majority vote winner in a district carries the entire district. There is no proportional representation.<sup>16</sup> Fringe groups must be absorbed into one of the two mainstream parties or risk being as irrelevant as the Libertarian Party or the Communist Party of the United States. While sometimes large numbers of a splinter group, such as the Populists in the late 1800s or the Tea Party movement in 2010, can have a significant impact on a major party's platform and agenda, standing on its own, a third party has little chance of surviving. Europe, and virtually the rest of the world's democracies (including Israel), has embraced proportional representation with its concomitant demand of appeasing each subgroup through coalitions. It was the requirement to form coalitions that doomed Spain to civil war in 1936 (there were twenty-one political parties represented in the Spanish Cortes) and enabled the rise of Adolf Hitler in Germany. Instead of providing a more honest representation of the people, proportional representation has allowed governments to duck and dodge difficult political issues even more than the U.S. Senate and House, for one can always blame “the other guy” in another minority party who will not unite. French coalitions fractured so instantaneously in the 1950s that the nation went through twelve governments in ten years. In the place of functioning legislatures, established and terrifically powerful entrenched bureaucracies arose. Germany had long featured government by bureaucracy (*Beamtentum*). The full extent of its ossification is perhaps best

exemplified by the bureaucrats hard at work in the Economic Ministry in Berlin in April 1945. While they calculated the year's coal and steel production from Silesia (a province almost entirely occupied by the Red Army the preceding month), the bureaucrats were interrupted by Soviet tanks on the street below. So buried were they in red tape that they literally ignored the real situation on the ground.

By 2000, all Europe had followed suit. Armies of faceless "public servants," often unionized, churned out regulations, dealt with appeals, saw that garbage and taxes were collected, and delivered mail. Most of all, the bureaucratic structure ensured that virtually no rapid change could occur and that the public's role in any policies would be drastically minimized. The assurance of uninterrupted daily services came at a price, sapping European will and energy by creating the illusion that government could meet all needs. With the exception (at times) of Germany and Britain (under Margaret Thatcher), Europe on the whole began to resemble the Ottoman Empire in its death throes with its inability to act, and its utter incapacity to act decisively.

From 1945 to 1989, the Soviet Union and its allies remained apart from these changes. If anything the Communist bloc intensified the bureaucratization with its infamous nomenklatura that administered every element of life. There was even a Soviet "Ministry of Rock" to supervise rock and roll music. But during that forty-four year period, class divisions reasserted themselves as the nomenklatura began to look like Western-style CEOs with nicer homes, cars, and better privileges. Nikita Khrushchev, Stalin's successor, had liberalized the USSR only to a point, ending most of the genocide but replacing it with systematic institutionalization of political opponents in asylums. Well into the 1970s, the Soviet leadership believed it could not only fight, but win, a nuclear war with the United States—especially if the American president was weak enough to be bullied.

What forced the change at first was the free market: communism simply didn't work, and its structures began to disintegrate. Despite the appraisal by many Westerners that the Soviet economy was sound—and even accelerating—the truth was much different. Communism was failing to provide even the most basic goods, including food and toilet paper (much less cars), to average citizens. The "commanding heights" that Lenin sought to hold were themselves crumbling. What pushed the USSR over the edge was an alliance of Westerners—Margaret Thatcher, Ronald Reagan, and Pope John Paul II—who actively sought to bring an end to the "Evil Empire." Once it became official policy not to tolerate a Communist Russia, but to defeat it, the end came quickly.

Still, this did not result in the complete victory of American exceptionalism worldwide. Instead, by the last part of the twentieth century, the simultaneous deemphasis on American culture and power and the new emphasis on the "equality" of other nations resulted in horrific inaction. The Europeans (like American Progressives) stood aside meekly as Rwanda was wracked by murder and war in the 1990s, and barely lifted themselves off life support to resist Serbia in that decade. Even then, the Serbian intervention was primarily to placate the Muslim Middle East to ensure an uninterrupted supply of oil. While Britain and even France participated in the UN-sanctioned eviction of Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces out of Kuwait in 1990–91, neither they nor any other Europeans would take the additional necessary steps of deposing him and searching the country for weapons of mass destruction. Meanwhile, Libya, under its dictator Muammar Gaddafi, quietly conducted its own WMD programs. Throughout the Middle East, Africa, and parts of Asia, ruthless "elected" thug-presidents, prime ministers, and monarchs crushed popular dissent, oppressed minority populations and women, pillaged natural resources, and defiantly ignored the international community whenever criticism was raised. While in the latter half of the twentieth century the United States would resist the Soviet Union aggressively, threats judged less immediate survived and metastasized. In one of the last instances of Westerners exerting power in their own interests without UN sanctions, votes, tribunals, committees,

or support, the United States removed Manuel Noriega of Panama from power in 1989. No one offered assistance, despite the fact that France would convict him in absentia for murder and money—laundering and confine him for fourteen months before extraditing him back to Panama in 2011.

Between the eviction of Noriega and the terror attacks on 9/11, one is hard pressed to find any instances of Westerners using old-fashioned power projection for national interests. Quite the contrary, the only nondomestic efforts of the European Union have been to reduce and restrain American military and political power worldwide; to use propaganda to denounce the notion of a superpower existing at all; and—with the help of China—to stage a relentless assault on the dollar as the world's reserve currency. This strategy, particularly the attack on the dollar, seemed successful in the 1980s when, briefly, Tokyo replaced New York as the world's leading financial center. China next mounted a challenge—still ongoing as of this writing—but already the Chinese economy has begun to founder, and financial experts question whether the “Chinese miracle” will be as illusory as the “Irish miracle” or the “Japanese miracle” of previous years.

China's current trend seems to again reaffirm our contention that no democratic system can succeed in modern times for long on both political and economic grounds without the four pillars of exceptionalism. It is no overblown claim to say that as of 2012 not one other nation in the world possessed the four pillars, and that the absence of common law—dictated to much of the world through the European civil law system—was as much to blame for the world's problems as trade fluctuations, energy prices, or terrorist threats. Indeed, a more appropriate way to view the twentieth and twenty-first centuries would be that it was because of the American ascendance, dominance, and influence, and its extension of significant elements of its four pillars to the rest of the world, that progress took place at all! This “Americentric” view has been ridiculed and demagogued, but seldom seriously examined, let alone disproved. By 2012, the world's weaknesses stemmed substantially from the weakness and decline of the United States of America and the lack of faith by Progressives in its founding principles and pillars.

Making this campaign against American preeminence all the more perplexing is the fact that Europeans and free nations around the world since 1945 had enthusiastically welcomed an American military presence, willingly invited in American culture, and greedily pocketed American Marshall Plan funds when the Soviet Union constituted a genuine threat. During most of that time, criticisms were muted and usually accompanied by a “but-we're-glad-you're-here” sentiment. Once the Soviet threat evaporated, however, the Europeans—having profited for decades from extremely low defense budgets that allowed them to spend extravagantly on domestic programs—criticized Americans as too warlike, and insufficiently concerned with social welfare. Europe, having imposed on the world two of the most horrific wars in human history, now lectured the United States about human rights.

None of this posed a danger so long as American political and intellectual leadership remained, well, pro-American. But by the late twentieth century, the entertainment and music industry (to a large extent) and at least half of the political culture had come to see the United States as the source of the world's problems, not the solution. Of course, there never was such a thing as “Greek exceptionalism” or (for at least one hundred years) “British exceptionalism” as defined by the four pillars that characterize the American experiment. But the fact that a left-wing politician would fail to understand American exceptionalism shouldn't be surprising: historian Gordon Wood missed the target as well, writing that “our beliefs in liberty, equality, constitutionalism, and the well-being of ordinary people gave Americans a special sense of destiny.”<sup>17</sup> As usual, however, it was Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America* who came closer:

Thus the Americans are in an exceptional situation, and it is unlikely that any other democratic people will be similarly placed. Their strictly Puritan origin; their exclusively commercial habits; even the country they inhabit, which seems to divert their minds from the study of science, literature, and the arts; the accessibility of Europe, which allows them to neglect these things without relapsing into barbarism . . . His desires, needs, education, and circumstances all seem united to draw the American's mind earthward. Only religion from time to time makes him turn a transient and distracted glance toward heaven. We should therefore give up looking at all democratic people through American spectacles and try at least to see them as they actually are.<sup>18</sup>

Tocqueville revealed his understanding of the American political system's unique structure and the free market that he saw everywhere. He also warned of the dangers to liberty that arose from the radical egalitarianism he sensed in the American character.

In a sense, then, the cold war provided the perfect object lesson in the value of America's ascent—pitting Christianity, law coming from the people, private property, and free markets against an enemy who accepted none of those principles. And, in a sense, it has been the demise of Soviet Russia that has loosed the shackles of self-restraint on the part of Progressives and other statists both at home and abroad. With no visible, obvious foreign threat (al-Qaeda, when it is mentioned at all, is dismissed as a group of religious radicals, not the spear point of a competing worldview), self-restraint has been replaced by self-loathing. Guilt and lack of conviction were natural results. American leadership no longer championed American exceptionalism, because by 2012 American leaders no longer believed in it. The mission that killed Osama bin Laden was heralded as essentially the end of the war on terror with the West having never come to grips with the persistent threat of radical Islam.

This is the story, then, of the world from 1945 to 2012 as it celebrated, then abandoned, the four essential elements of the American character. It is also the story of the abandonment of the very concept of virtue, for virtue is not relative. In the American past it was learned, to paraphrase Lincoln, in every act of being an American. And it can be taught, though the education of virtue in America (let alone the world) is as obsolete as a black-and-white television set. Above all, virtue must be practiced. Any society unwilling or unable to support virtue is a society adrift. The world's immediate quest for the advantages derived from American-like qualities of liberty, justice, and equality was laudable and timely, but the steady—and often deliberate—deterioration of the principles that underlay those qualities has been inversely pathological and sudden.

This, then, stands as the question of the hour. Can enough Americans find their founding principles again to save themselves? And if they do, is it too late to save the rest of the passengers on the sinking world ship? One thing is certain: we remain the "last, best hope" for mankind, for a world without an exceptional America will not long tolerate even a France or a Belgium, or any Western democratic power with free markets. It is entirely possible that without American exceptionalism and its pillars, there would be no free markets, for the impetus toward wealth and power redistribution is utterly unstoppable in their absence. Once private property, citizen virtue, and free markets are gone, democide, violence, and murder will take their place, for in such a world without liberty, the horrors of Nazi Germany or the gulag archipelago will not only become common—they will cease to be horrors at all.

## Hot Spots, Cold War

### TIME LINE

- 1945: Yalta, Potsdam agreements; Franklin Roosevelt dies; Germany surrenders; atomic bomb dropped; Japan surrenders; Germany divided into occupation zones; Japan pulls out of China and other territories; high inflation in United States
- 1946: CIA established; ENIAC, first digital computer, produced; Churchill gives “Iron Curtain” speech; Nuremberg trial verdicts; decoding of Venona intercepts reveals names of Soviet spies in United States
- 1947: Canadian independence granted; Communists seize power in Poland; Marshall Plan instituted; Communists seize power in Hungary
- 1948: Communists seize control of Czechoslovakia; Berlin airlift begins; first trial of Alger Hiss; Harry Truman reelected
- 1949: NATO formed; USSR tests first atomic bomb
- 1950: Rosenberg spies indicted; McCarthy’s Wheeling speech; Truman orders development of hydrogen bomb; Korean War begins; second trial of Hiss
- 1951: UNIVAC, first commercial computer, delivered
- 1952: Elizabeth II becomes queen of England; Truman attempts nationalization of American steel industry; Eisenhower elected president
- 1953: Korean War ends; Khrushchev becomes secretary of Soviet Communist Party; rebellion in East Germany crushed; Rosenbergs executed for espionage
- 1954: *Brown v. Board of Education*; Army-McCarthy hearings
- 1955: Soviets and Allies withdraw from Austria; Eisenhower suffers heart attack; Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott
- 1956: Hungarian Revolution suppressed; Eisenhower reelected; Sudanese independence
- 1957: *Sputnik* launched by USSR; Civil Rights Commission established; Governor Orval Faubus blocks black students from attending Little Rock

1958: NASA formed; Hewlett-Packard creates first microprocessor

1959: Castro seizes power in Cuba; Titan intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) fired; Alaska and Hawaii admitted as states

## **Ghosts Walking in Procession**

The flattened landscape could have been Mars, at least what people knew of the planet. No one had been there, and no man-made robotic cameras had yet photographed it. But the charred scene, interrupted occasionally by a shell that only upon close inspection could be identified as a building, had been entirely created—and destroyed—by humans. This was Hiroshima, only hours after the atomic blast that leveled buildings as though they were cardboard and incinerated Japanese citizens like kindling. Partial structures that had only minutes earlier been multistory buildings stood atop mountains of rubble and burned bodies. Akihiro Takahashi, then a student at a junior high school, watched from a playground as the silver plane flew over. It was the last thing he remembered before he was blown backward thirty feet from where he stood, his ears “nearly melted off.” He was badly burned everywhere—his back, arms, legs. When he regained awareness (somehow, he had instinctively walked to the river to cool himself), he saw horrific images. Years later, he told an interviewer the people “looked like ghosts walking in procession.”<sup>1</sup> In the river, corpses bobbed in the water. And beyond, the city was flattened, turned to rubble, devoid of life.

The scene in Berlin just a few months earlier was scarcely different. Spared an atomic attack, the German capital nevertheless had been pulverized, buildings hollowed out from Soviet artillery and bombing, brick and stone piles blocking streets, vegetation scarce. Berlin’s residents cowered in the basements of their apartment buildings, many structures blasted apart on one or two sides. There may have been no radiation, but the extent of the devastation was much the same as in the Japanese cities ravaged by atomic bombs, and in the case of cities such as Dresden and Hamburg, perhaps worse.

An unexpected, even shocking, change occurred within a short time (by historical standards). By 2000, both Berlin and Hiroshima not only had come back, restored to vitality and health, but were rebuilt anew, making them both in many ways more “modern” than some American industrial centers such as Detroit. Indeed, a popular Internet mail item compared pictures of Detroit in 2012 with Hiroshima, and concluded by asking, “Who won the war?”

Both the decisive victory by the Allies and the subsequent “hard peace,” as John Kennedy called it, occurred during a time when America had emerged as the primary world power. Although the Soviet Union—by 1949 in control of large swaths of eastern Europe—had used its manpower advantage to overwhelm the Nazis on the Eastern Front, there was no doubt that the United States was years ahead of the USSR in science, technology, medicine, and the material condition of its most ordinary citizens. Determined to close this gap and eventually overtake the United States, the Soviets committed themselves domestically and in their foreign policy to expansionism in the purest sense of Lenin’s doctrine. Communist “greatness” had to be spread to the world, by force if necessary. And, for a short time, only the USA stood between the Communists and their goal.

This came at a tremendous (and at the time, often hidden) cost. The United States—as late as the mid-1970s—doggedly shouldered the burden of protecting Europe with high defense spending, allowing America’s own heavy industries to wither under the weight of regulation and taxation, compounded by rising inflation. Calls to remove American military bases from the Far East and

Europe were met with legitimate concern by hawks at home who feared Soviet expansionism, but also by foreign calls for the United States (and its money!) to remain right where it was. Isolationist voices of the prewar period had been silenced by Nazi aggression and Pearl Harbor. At home, by the 1960s the economic reengineering implemented during the New Deal had lost its association with World War II necessities and was finally being questioned, both by conservatives fearing the growing power of the federal government, and by liberals fearing the rise of corporate power, especially when Democrat John F. Kennedy implemented Mellonesque tax cuts to stimulate investment.

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