

Un Civilization

Urban Geopolitics
in a Time of Chaos

Gregory R. Copley

"... our only conscious grand strategist"

— Yossef Bodansky,

*renowned geo-strategist and best-selling author of
Bin Laden: the Man Who Declared War on America*

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY PARENTS,
Brian Wallie Earl Copley
1916-1991,
Marjorie Lindsay Copley
1916-2011,
and my wife, Pamela,
because they each perfected and reveled in
the basic element of society,
the Family,
without losing sight of
how families join with families to become clans,
clans join with clans to become nations,
and then cultures and civilizations,
to build prosperity, progress, and the future.
Or fail at their collective peril.

*Up to now everyone has been at liberty to hope what he pleased about the future. Where there are no facts, sentiment rules. But henceforth it will be every man's business to inform himself of what **can** happen and therefore of what with the unalterable necessity of destiny and irrespective of personal ideals, hopes or desires, **will happen**. When we use the risky word "freedom" we shall mean freedom to do, not this or that, but the necessary or nothing.
... To birth belongs death, to youth age, to life generally its form and allotted span. The present is a civilized, emphatically not a cultured time-period.*

— Oswald Spengler: *The Decline of the West*, 1918

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An Exhibition at the Royal Academy

☞ *I SEE IN LINE and brushstroke there
A breath of life immortal, fair.
In paint and bronze and marble art
We grasp the future e'er we part,
While spoken words and daily deeds
Moulder like infertile seeds.*

*The only living art that keeps
Is grandeur writ both large and deep
Across the earth in giant scale
So all beside is dust and pale.*

*The thoughts which down through time compete
With art must gather all complete,
For concepts poor in spirit die
Before the things which please the eye.*

— Gregory Copley, London, 1987

Preface

Venturing Into an Uncivilized World

YOUR GRANDCHILDREN WILL TELL THEIR grandchildren of a time in which the earth teemed with humans. Of a time when cities were full, vibrant with their own primacy. When the only certainty seemed to be that tomorrow would be still better than today. Until it became clear that the certainty had slipped away, and complexity had overtaken simplicity. Until it became clear that countryside were becoming emptier, and cities hollowed and challenged by problems practical and economic.

The tale will be told, but it will not be heeded by your grandchildren's grandchildren. As George Orwell, the writer, once said: "Every generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it."

But this transformation of the earth which our grandchildren will recount did not occur because human nature had changed. Indeed, human nature remained constant, but its elements became stark, as they always do under pressure. Human *numbers*, however, *had* changed, somewhere tipping — as the second decade of the 21st Century began — from seemingly inexorable growth to seemingly inexorable decline. And it was difficult to say whether the economic chaos caused the move from population growth toward population fall, or the other way around. The real-

ity, so much more complex than a single titanic apocalypse, was a growing and sclerotic web of interrelated issues, in which urbanization was induced and made paramount in human society-building by technology and wealth. In which human welfare — including the survival rate of infants and the longevity of individuals — was expanded, and lives made more sedentary and abstract. And then, because of that change of life — from mobile and rural, to sedentary and urban — life expectancy averages eventually and gradually began to fall. Economic dislocations began to hit the budgets which funded advances in science and technology, advances which had earlier been sufficient to act as a counterweight to the urban-related rise in heart disease, diabetes, and cancers. It began, too, to reduce funding for basic life-sustaining medical care and pure water availability.

And gradually, even by the early 21st Century, populations in the highly urbanized societies of Europe, North America, Japan, and Australasia began to decline in their reproduction rates, the impression of national growth artificially sustained and distorted for a period only by immigration.

It was at this time that the great confluence of trends began to bite, with social, economic, scientific, military, and other patterns beginning to interact competitively. We began seeing in the early 21st Century the start of a process which our grandchildren's grandchildren would witness in full flower. This pattern would be upon the world before the middle of the 21st Century. The global population would by then already have been substantially reduced, although still probably much greater than it was in 1950. There will be profound changes, however, in society, including the reality — unlike the situation in 1950 — that expectations and confidence will become dampened.

The world of the mid-21st Century will be more textured

and sobering than the society of today. True, we have been told for decades that “the sky is falling”; that we are all doomed; that mankind will bring about the destruction of the earth. That we must pay obeisance to new gods, of “climate change”, of “greenery”; that we must live lives of hand-wringing angst. That we must find scapegoats, and sacrifice them on the altar of Ra, the Sun God; that we must obey the ideological tenets of the collected masses or be pilloried for each dissenting word. It was ever thus, but it is particularly so at times of great social upheaval. And when the end of the world does not come at the hour appointed by the almighty seers, we move on to the next form of panic. Do we never tire of this endless fear?

That is not to say that change is not already powerfully upon us. It is, but it is not necessarily to be feared. It is just a new horizon to explore.

Let us remember the US academics, Paul R. Ehrlich and his wife, who in their 1968 book, *The Population Bomb: Population Control or the Race to Oblivion?*, were doom-sayers, forecasting mass starvation in the 1970s and 1980s due to global overpopulation, leading to other social upheavals. They created an hysteria which, though proven wrong, echoes through the world of the 21st Century. Today, other linearists forecast, with equal pomposity and unerring certainty, other disasters from the growth of human population, stretching uninterrupted through to the end of the 21st Century. The Club of Rome — a body full of its own demonstrably incorrect scientific augustness — also said in the 1960s that the world would soon run out of food. Others say that we will run out of energy; out of land; out of everything. This book, I hope, satisfactorily refutes such “linearists”.

We will, in this book, address not merely the changes wrought by population movement and fluctuating num-

bers, but we will explore how our whole energy framework — and the geopolitics attendant to that — is transforming, and how all of the changes also will be reflected in the way we communicate, and the way we fight wars. This is a complex period of change. I hope that the chapters will gradually unfold this layered and textured mosaic for you.

That there are challenges and change ahead for humanity — and for all species — is not in doubt. Such is the pattern of nature, and of evolution. Populations rise and fall, and move. Patterns of weather fluctuate incessantly. But the key elements of change which we are facing — and which we must take into account in our search for security — include the unprecedented urbanization of human societies, and the changes which this brings in thought and dependency patterns; and the reality that human population numbers are about to go into a period of substantial decline. These two factors (unprecedented urbanization and the coming substantial decline in human population numbers), particularly coming at a time of change in the global strategic architecture, will affect everything, from the worth of currency and property to the ability to grow and distribute foodstuffs, and whether or not we will see security and progress — and even improved or declining lifespans — in human societies.

We are entering an age which many alive today will not recognize, or easily manage. But it is an age of upheaval which our ancestors of a millennia-and-a-half ago — with the decline of Roman civilization — most certainly *would* recognize.

We cannot forestall or deny great change, but we can understand it and benefit from it. We have already found that massive population growth over the past century did not mean that the earth “ran out of food”, or energy, or space, or wealth. Humanity, indeed, grew more wealthy on a *per ca-*

pita basis; food supplies grew to meet the rising numbers; energy supplies were suddenly found; resources abounded.

Of course all societies, nations, institutions, and people — all living things — pass. *Sic transit gloria mundi*: Thus the glory of the world passes away. Change, including death, is the corollary of life. Understanding this change, however, requires that we stand distant from our life and from the society in which we live. That we stand upon some hill alone, and gaze across the haze of history, earthly horizons, and skies, and see the patterns which sweep onward to the future. Winds chill such hilltops with a loneliness which enters the marrow of the contemplative observer. But there is a clarity and intimacy, as well, which begins to unfold as the patterns emerge.

This is the beginning of the grand strategic view necessary to face the coming age of change. It is not mankind, or the earth's, first such transformational epoch.

Grand Strategy takes, as its basis, a comprehensive view of that which is, as well as that which was, and that which may be possible. It is a view which must be based on a knowledge of which paths through nature and through humanity have been determined over time. We need a perspective of the terrain — the mosaic — of the universe and the behavior of all of nature, including human history. The great military commander of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Jan Tarnowski (1488-1561), in his treatise, *An Outline of Military Method* (1558), cited his motto: "Know your adversary". Every great strategist since Sun-tzu has said some variation of this. But, for the grand strategist, it is insufficient to know merely the adversary; it is vital to comprehend the entire warp and weft of history and nature. The more that comprehension is possible, the more that it is then possible for an individual, a leader, or a society to create goals, and determine the means of achieving them, in

the full understanding of context.

Clearly, this is like saying that a verifiable unified field theory — a theory which explains the interlinking of everything — would enable us to understand how each aspect of the universe works. So to expect to have the kind of all-embracing grand strategic vision of the way mankind functions within the natural world is itself a utopian dream. But the fact that complete knowledge or wisdom is elusive does not mean that we should restrict our thinking to the prosaic, or to short-term, narrowly-defined intellectual specializations.

It is human nature to seek immediate gratification; to be impatient to achieve short-term goals. Our concern only for limited objectives and gratifications means that we perforce tend to take a short-term and limited view of history and context. We can only envision, and plan for, that which we *choose* to envision and understand.

What if we could understand the patterns of nature — not just human nature — which show us where life flows, and where obstacles lie? We are constantly told that humankind — human society — is complex, and yet we assume that it takes linear paths in its social development: the “march of history”. But what is “a linear path”? A linear path to a snail can be expressed in centimeters. In human social development, a few centimeters cannot even measure the fluctuations of a warped wagon wheel embarked on a journey of miles and ages. We look at complexity, and where we cannot comprehend it, we call it “chaos”. Societies in flux we call “anarchical”.

We cannot yet — if ever we will — comprehend fully the patterns of nature. But we know that there *are* patterns to all things, and patterns which embrace more than just human society. They are not necessarily cyclical, and they are never in the long term truly linear; indeed, they may never

be repetitive in a manner which ensures that history can ever truly repeat itself. They are merely patterns which assume recognizable and comfortable shapes, like the swirls of the muddy waters of the Amazon intertwining with the green Atlantic Ocean.

Pattern recognition, then, is the key to Grand Strategy; the basis of assessing the strategic terrain, if we define “strategic terrain” as the entirety of context which bears upon our lives and fortunes. It is the detailed vision and acceptance of *that which is*. A grand strategic perspective minimizes the necessity for us to be shaped merely by faith and belief, and embraces the great architecture of earth’s, and life’s, timeless interconnections based on observable phenomena. It comprehends the behavioral necessities of the microbes which inhabit the soil, to the life forces of those things which we think of as living organisms and beings.

This is a view which reaches toward the broadest horizons of our intellectual and sensory capacities. It is, perhaps, an “aesthetic nihilism”; even a “romantic nihilism”: a joy in *what is* and *what is possible*. It sees the beauty of the entire pattern of life, a pattern which — when embraced — shows clearly the paths open to the passage of individuals, societies, and all of humanity. More than that, it shows the possibility of paths yet unseen. Paths less traveled.

Ultimately, that is what this book is about. It is a study which happily embraces *that which is*; it sees no need for fear in what can be seen as the coming chaos, which is in reality merely cratometamorphosis: the reorganization of societies. As with all things, if we understand the darkness, then we see light dawning in it. And we fear not.

Certainly, this is also a book about how civilizational ages end, or transform. Writers such as Karl Marx had postulated that capitalism and industrialization set the stage for the transformation of societies — their capture and taming

— into “communist” societies which would then be the ultimate example of civilization. What, instead, we have seen is that the urbanization of societies into great cities — indeed a phenomenon which was enabled most successfully by the free movement of capital — has also led to a transformation of *how* we think and act, collectively. This new urban thinking — which has created “urban geopolitics” — has led us to a period of what has become massive systemic over-control.

In other words, urbanization has led us to a point at which the natural balances of a mixed urban/rural/maritime society have been replaced, with many benefits as well as many unknowns, by city-dominated thinking. The natural balances — market forces, but more than just that — are gradually replaced by regulatory processes which remove the individual from the equation.

Oswald Spengler, who saw the blossoming of urbanization in the early 20th Century and described the infancy of what I describe as urban geopolitics as “economic-megalopolitan politics”.¹

The regulatory process which, as I said, removes the individual from the equation is how organic urban social growth is channeled as it becomes more complex and abstract. The resultant “massive systemic over-control”, then, is a reaction which we have seen before in urban-dominated societies. It is not, in fact, just a phenomenon of the early 21st Century. These modern-era attempts at social containment are merely reflections of the autocracies and tyrannies of the ancient world. We have seen them in the utopianist, essentially similar and centralized dictatorships of communism, socialism, and national-socialism. These

1 Charles Frederick Atkinson, who first translated Oswald Spengler’s *The Decline of the West*, footnoted the word “megapolitan”, and said: “English not possessing the adjective-forming freedom of German, we are compelled to coin a word for the rendering of *grossstädtisch*, an adjective not only frequent but of emphatic significance in the author’s argument.”

have all been urban-driven processes in which centralized control is deemed better than the balance of market forces.

They all appear just before a society — or, perhaps in the terms of Spengler in *The Decline of the West*, a *civilization* (as opposed to a *culture*) — collapses or transforms.

Having said that, societies come and go, mostly with as little fanfare as the passing of individuals, their memory sustained only by the grandeur of their deeds or by the physical structures built during their lifetime. Mostly, however, societies — as opposed to sovereign entities, such as nation-states — transform either with their maturing processes, or through collapse or conquest. Some, indeed, are transformed by the peoples they conquer, just as individuals are oft transformed by marriage.

For decades of speaking with those who believed that the sun would never set on the (take your pick) British, US, or Soviet empires, I have posed the question: can you name even 10 percent of the European sovereign states which existed even 300 years ago? I have yet to meet one person who could do so.

Perhaps the great historian, Prof. Norman Davies, could do so. His eloquent book, *Vanished Kingdoms: The Rise and Fall of States and Nations*, published in 2012, addressed the frailty of states, cultures, and languages. He noted: “The capacity of human societies both to absorb and to discard cultures is much underestimated. In reality, just as individuals can go abroad and merge into a foreign community, so a stationary population, if subject to a changed linguistic and cultural environment, can quite easily be persuaded to follow suit. Dominant cultures are closely connected to dominant power groups. As the balance of power shifts, the balance of cultures shifts as well.”

The book you are holding discusses the reality that the *entire* pattern of humanity is changing more rapidly and

dramatically in the 21st Century even than it did in the 20th. That century saw two World Wars, great revolutions in the Russian, Iranian, Ethiopian, Chinese, and British empires; the end of much of the framework of the colonial era, and the creation of a hundred or more new sovereign states. In a world of change, then, that first requirement of grand strategy applies: know yourself and your own goals. If you wish to resist change to your own values, language, and status; if you wish to project your cultural and linguistic dominance on others; then first you must know what those values are which you cherish, and what you wish to sustain and achieve.

But we also need to be aware that change occurs inexorably. Some of it we must embrace. Some we can shape. All of us can understand.

— *Gregory R. Copley*
September 2012

*I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown
And wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed.
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings:
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away."*

— *Ozymandias*, By Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1818

The dust of creeds outworn

— from *Prometheus Unbound*, by Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1820

I

UnCivilization

*Why the emerging
“age between the powers” offers
uncertainty and opportunity*

“There is nothing that man fears more than the touch of the unknown. He wants to see what is reaching toward him, and to be able to recognize or at least classify it. Man always tends to avoid physical contact with anything strange. In the dark, the fear of an unexpected touch can mount to panic. Even clothes give insufficient security: it is easy to tear them and pierce through to the naked, smooth, defenseless flesh of the victim.”

“All the distances which men create round themselves are dictated by this fear. They shut themselves in houses which no-one may enter, and only there feel some measure of security. The fear of burglars is not only the fear of being robbed, but also the fear of a sudden and unexpected clutch out of the darkness.”

— Elias Canetti’s opening paragraphs to *Crowds & Power*.

WEEDS PROLIFERATE BETWEEN the tessellated pavements of the great modern civilizations. They began to flourish unnoticed in those heady days after the Cold War when we were drunk with wealth. We spent something we called “the peace dividend” as though it were of the same, hard, and valued currency with which our ancestors built towering civilizations to challenge the grandeur of the ages.

But the weeds we failed to see were just as the weeds and silt of the great canal system of Angkor. There, they had also gone unnoticed as mighty Angkor came to its zenith (after some seven centuries) in the 16th Century, until the artery canals were no longer navigable, and the great stone city became unable to go about its trade. It had become useless. As if someone had turned off the lights in the 21st Century urban sprawl of the north-east of the North American Continent, darkening the heart of a great civilization and rendering void all its tools and viability.

There, in the heart of modern North America, the possibility that the lights could indeed be switched off had become real by the second decade of the 21st Century. The comforting pillars of social structures — like the social architecture all around the modern world — had, a decade into the Century, begun to crumble like the columns of Carthage. The dust of creeds outworn already swirled in the eddies of a new wind. Civilization was becoming undone, unraveled. As it always does. And always to the astonishment of the citizens of every great society. It is the cycle of things. But that is too easy; too simple. These are *human cycles*, made by humans, destroyed by human misjudgment. And, to some extent, part of a pattern of life (which, with individuals as with societies, evolves through the stages from birth and maturity to ageing and death), regardless of the quality of decisions. There is no other predestination, as much as it seems so; as much as there seems a human predilection to ignore the messages left to us in the ruined stones, runic stones. There *are* cycles — warped and malleable though they may be — in history; in nature. Yes. But there *are* things which interrupt them. That was made clear by Spengler in *The Decline of the West*, in which he highlights how eras of culture evolve into eras of civilization, each of which, being organic, have their distinct characteristics,

and their own cycles of youth, maturity, decline, and death.

What we see, in the aggregate, are not clear cycles; not clear paths: merely *patterns* of activities and tendencies which show up more starkly over millennia rather than decades.

In any event, with this present, remorseless wind, omnipresent global power has disappeared from the earth. At least for now. What remains of it are shadows. No nation-state, even by the start of the second decade of the 21st Century, has the economic strength, the will, or the resources to sustain the kind of constant military capability which had seemed so fluidly virile and ready through a half-century or so of the Cold War. Not even China by this time — as dynamic as it seemed — was in sight of the kind of global military reach from which the United States was retiring. Power is more than wealth.

True multipolarism had by the end of the first decade of the 21st Century begun to return to the earth. The coming decades would be peopled by middling and lesser powers. It was, then, to be an age of small wars; an era which became more-or-less anarchical, or less than stable, despite the mass urge for more regulation. But an age, too, of cities. Not shining cities on hills, but sprawling, fractious collections of enclaves. They have already bred their own views of the world. It is not a vision from the hilltop, but from the crowded, foetid valleys. And nothing, save the flick of a power switch, plunging them into darkness, can move them from their paths.

Well, then, the superpowers have left the stage: The king is dead. Long live the king! But where is the next king? He is as yet absent. We have entered the interregnum: a period between one monarch and the next. It will be an age in which population levels peak, and then decline; a time of the transformation of economics, both directly and con-

ceptually; and, to use words which I have introduced into our lexicon to describe the processes, it will be a new age of *Cratogenesis*, the birth of nations; *Cratocide*, the murder of nations; and *Cratometamorphosis*, the restructuring of entire societies.

During this period of the interregnum — this age between global powers — we know that the world will be undergoing massive population upheavals which would further throw the power (and economic) equations into uncertainty. As a result, the next “king” power will be very different from the last. Even if the United States of America — the last superpower — should rebuild its strategic momentum, it would inevitably be a very different world power than it was during, and just after, the Cold War.

Yet in this new age of seeming chaos, we see — because of the new geopolitics of urban societies — a growing (and unsurprising) craving for certainty and stability. This mounting addiction to institutionally-guaranteed safety is, ironically, the factor which will lead to *greater instability*. We are now in an urban age in which most individuals have come — because of the way in which urban, abstract societies have evolved — *to choose and prefer the certainty of oppression over the uncertainty and opportunity of freedom*.

The pace of technological growth and the rate of infrastructure creation in the West also began, by about 2010, to show signs of strain and impending decline. Moreover, technology and knowledge have come to proliferate so widely in the world that the margins of technological superiority, which had once been safely with the West, have narrowed.

The narrowing of the West’s technological advantage over the rest of the world was inevitable. As the outsourcing of production occurred, the associated transfer of capability meant that the progeny of technology — the next gener-

ations — would begin to blossom in the country to which the production had been contracted. In the same way, capabilities and culture had been “exported” and outsourced through colonial development of the past few hundred years. The US, Canada, Australia, and so on, are the progeny of Britain — and Europe — which created them as modern entities. All of these entities, the states and the concept we call “the West”, are mortal life forms. They are concepts framed in the minds of man, and survive as long as the mind can retain and value them.

As well, in this present fragility, inflation — often an insidious inflation outside the consumer indicators — means that funds buy less and less power in the 21st Century. Witness the growing price of elections; the disproportionate rise in the cost of weapons systems; the emergence of massive costs to societies of compliance with social expectations; and so on. Social priorities have changed because of urbanization, and because of the flattened hierarchies brought about through the leavening effects of information technology.

Indeed, energy-dependent tools and accessories of Western society now consume a greater share of economies, as the assumption prevails that technological efficiencies permit a pseudo-post-industrial population to work less on physical production, and to consume more.

And as mighty societies have become more electrically-dependent, they have put themselves into a position where they have been able to be humiliated and mesmerized by Lilliputians — less wealthy and less educated societies — waging whole-of-society “asymmetric warfare” against them. The Lilliputians cannot afford the overwhelming wealth and technology of the major powers. *Their* strength is that they do not depend on wealth or technology. They depend on innate human skills, while the ma-

jor powers can no longer function *without* technology, which essentially, today, means tools and weapons which operate because of electricity and internal combustion engines. Thus, the weaker powers — paying the price in lives rather than funds — exhaust the richer, even though the recent wars have done nothing to enhance the fortunes of either side.

Meanwhile, the United States had itself, by 2010, two decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union, demonstrated that it had shed much of its global military, political, and economic reach. It is unlikely to be able to rebuild that capacity for at least a couple of decades, assuming it chooses to do so at all. The People's Republic of China (PRC), for all the bluster of its readiness to overtake the US economically and militarily, was, by 2012, facing enormous hurdles to its growth and stability and, even if focused heavily on military growth, would itself lack the global reach of a true superpower for at least a further couple of decades. The PRC leadership, like the Russian leadership, learned well the lessons of the Cold War: to be a mere “gunpowder state” — a power with only military might and little economic clout — is to be a hollow power with every move an existential risk.

Even so, before we revert to gross domestic product (GDP) statistics for the nominal (even artificial) economic comparisons between states to assert the continuing grandeur of the West, we need to recognize the fragility of our statistical matrix. It is based on artificial asset values and trust in currency levels mutually and fluidly agreed between most societies. We can never forget, especially in times of upheaval, that “value” and “trust” — including *even the concept* of currency — are perceptual, or psychological, factors and tools, not physical ones. So, while psychological factors are — as Napoleon noted — critical dy-

namics of success or failure, they remain less easily measurable factors of strategic power.

Currencies, economies, and societal willpower can evaporate overnight. What we learn in strategic intelligence — as part of the overriding preoccupation with global context — is that long-term assessments of threat, opportunity, or trend cannot be based on perceptions of the intent of a society or its leaders, because that can change in an instant. What must be considered are *underlying structural realities*, such as true measures of wealth, or on existing military formations, which take decades to shape. The question is, then, how we evaluate what are the underlying long-term trends. Some assets, or things still on the books as strategic assets, may be of little real value in a changing world.

We should not think of profound strategic change in terms merely of a series of cataclysmic events. The world almost trebled in its human population level between 1950 and 2012, and yet we scarcely noticed it. All the while we grew our food supply, our basic infrastructure, our global *per capita* wealth and wellbeing, our social tools (including urbanization and the technologies associated with that). In the process, we built what amounted to new societies, and the social — political — structures to handle our changing status. Some of the “new” societies bore the names of “old” societies, but few societies today bear more than an archaeological resemblance to their foundations. Britain, today, is, for example, a very different strategic entity than it was a century ago; so, too, is the United States. Indeed, our current global grouping of societies evolved during, and as a result of, the period of wealth and population growth which began with the end of World War II.

Our present situation, then, reflects the reality that the *maturation* of the process which began with the Allied victory in World War II, and which led to an acceleration of

technological accomplishment and therefore social transformation, has meant that our societies have reached structural (if not necessarily emotional) maturity in a shorter time than the historical average. As the Western versions of democratic nations gained wealth, they extended electoral franchises to the point of extreme populism, and parliaments had no function but to seek new laws to give, like manna, to the people. This legislative pace grew ever more rapid; laws accumulated faster and faster. It was a social appetite which, as with gluttony, led to obesity and cholesterol-rich sclerosis, clogging arteries and restricting thought, individual freedom and innovation, as well as constraining fluid action. This is why modern empires have shorter lives than those of old: their processes accelerated their lives and their ultimate demise.

The US empire lasted as a global iteration only six decades.

Social structures mature, like the individual people who comprise societies. They acquire more possessions; some physical, some intellectual. The process of achieving stability in dynamic societies — and therefore the ability to accumulate wealth and stability down the generations — truly began with the agreement of a simple process: the peaceful and orderly transition of power from one generation to the next through the practice of primogeniture. The English Norman kings *and* their nobles, élites, and societies gradually agreed around the 12th Century to accept that the eldest son of a reigning king would assume the crown from his father.

It was from that simple step that we began the process of codifying the orderly transition of power, modifying and expanding the system of primogeniture to the modern processes of today. Not that — outside of monarchs — the process of orderly and commonly-agreed transfers of power

had been neglected before. The Hellenic city-states, among others, understood the process, but their deliberate (and deliberative) structures were still subject to the real, raw powers of kings, or to leaders and tyrants who wielded military power.

How easily the Macedonians prevailed over Hellas, and how easily Rome later consumed it; and then the Ottomans prevailed, too, over the Hellenes.

The Western wealth process and its retention of power related directly to that concept of political succession. What paralleled the leadership succession and governmental continuity practices was the transfer, throughout the civil populations, of knowledge and wealth down the generations. Rights of property and wealth inheritance, and the ingrained sense of family duty built up a process whereby wealth built upon wealth, and knowledge and tools kept building on each other down the generations. This was the positive, enabling side of the evolution of Western technology, wealth, and strategic power. But as societies urbanized, and as they focused on the immediacy (or short-termism) of modern, urban life, so we saw the negative side of the pattern develop. This led to a situation where inheritance taxes, constraints on innovation-driven investment, and so on, were motivated by the need to feed government bureaucracies, which largely ceased to be the servants of the electorate and became the rulers of the citizenry. This urbanization helped move Western societies away from balance in the process of self-sustaining production and toward an immediate consumption orientation.

Today's "modern" political structures, and the societies which attend them, are the creation of the past couple of centuries. If we humans are each an agglomeration of organically interactive cells, then it is logical to believe that *societies of humans* are equally organic. They are born; they

evolve; their arteries ultimately clog with a growing mountain of legislation and practices, slowing the flow of productive nutrients; and they die. Health, medical, and lifestyle advances have progressively extended the viable lifespan of humans. Similarly, human innovation has gradually extended — in some senses — the lifespan of some political systems. As with medical and healthcare advances, it has been a process of trial and error.

It is not insignificant that we face a maturation of efforts to sustain the average *per capita* life expectancy of humans at the same time as we face the maturation of some of the political systems which have dominated the earth for the past century and more.

Societies become victims of their own success. They keep accumulating laws and modes of behavior and entitlement — now overwhelmingly urban in nature — which ultimately conflict with each other and become counterproductive, and these contradictions are locked into the contradictions in individual life expectancy. Human life elongation is tied not just to lifestyle, but to medical drugs, and particularly to that most pervasive and yet little-discussed hour-by-hour dependency on electricity. These are the things provided by wealthy societies.

The accumulation of laws and entitlements and the ageing of infrastructure in the West began to show as societal arterial sclerosis by the beginning of the 21st Century. Modern societal structures — that is, those structures of our present civilization — began to show their age. We know, however, that this is not an irreversible process, just as we know that the impact of many diseases can be halted or reversed with medication or lifestyle changes. So this in no way spells the guaranteed decline and death of Western societies, or even traditional Western values (if anyone today can indeed articulate “Western values”).

It *does* require, however, that the condition be understood so that it can be addressed. As with human ageing, we need to know *why* we, as societies, need or wish to keep living. We *require* purpose to make progress. We need, therefore, to know who we are, what we represent in terms of values, and where we wish to go. By the early 21st Century, few Western societies could actually articulate their values or where they wished to go. Many define “values” as processes, such as “democracy”, but cannot even articulate the meaning of democracy. (Indeed, the meaning and purposes of “democracy” has changed substantially over the past few decades in the minds of most people.) Many define their goal merely as a continuation of wealth — what they take from society — rather than by what they contribute or seek to achieve.

We are entering a period which as yet has no firm horizons, let alone goals, and under such conditions it is difficult to plot a course. This makes leadership problematic, because there is no leadership without mission; mission derived from vision. A leader, by definition, cannot wander aimlessly, for if he does then he is no leader. Winston Churchill, for all his talent, experience, and wisdom as a politician, could not lead Britain and the West during World War II until he had a mission open up to him.

This unsettled sea bodes ill for the West. And yet, as Rome’s republic similarly atrophied, and Julius Cæsar began the process of transforming Rome into an imperial monarchy, we see that catharsis can — and often does — allow a society to cleanse its arteries and build a new vibrancy. It is often a delicate, messy, and risky process. The overthrow of Iran’s Qajar dynasty in 1925 led to a revitalized state under the Pahlavis, but the overthrow of the Pahlavis in 1979 led to a dysfunctional society which was in many respects held in limbo. The overthrow of the Romanovs in

Russia in 1917 led to seven decades of reduced productivity.

The overthrow — albeit disguised from much of the world — of the Maoist stagnation in the People’s Republic of China by Deng Xiaoping, on the other hand, began a revitalizing approach which “saved” communist China. The collapse of the communists in the Soviet Union, too, in 1991, led to the revitalization of Russia. Thomas Jefferson, in the Americas, foresaw revolution’s necessity to reinvigorate republics. But this “revolutionary revitalization” phenomenon is a process of largely-unexamined structural causes, and invariably uncertain outcomes.

In our current context, it was the wealth generated by the confusing, internally competitive, and often internally combative, ascent of Westernism which enabled the rapidity of the global population rise from 2.5-billion in 1950 to seven-billion in 2012. Richer people ate better; they were safer from depredation; they benefitted from better health care. But at some stage the cycle matures, and falters.

We failed to understand as revolutionary the growth of global wealth and global population, and what it meant in terms of urbanization and the creation of what I call “urban geopolitics” after World War II. But it *was* revolutionary. Given this, we will probably also see the *decline* in global population levels and global wealth as merely evolutionary. The impact, however, when viewed from about 2050, *will* be seen to have been revolutionary, both in direct and indirect terms. The impending global population decline, which will become evident within two decades or so (sooner than most estimates), will produce a concurrent chaos of lateral population movements, including economic refugeeism and proportionately even more urbanization.

A simplistic view of the philosophies of Malthus does not provide all the answers. War will not in massive terms di-

rectly reduce numbers, but wars could so influence economies and trade that the net result would be a reduction in populations, or provide a hesitation in the breeding pool. Pandemics — which, like the 1918-19 global influenza outbreak, stemmed from disruptions caused by war — may account for a percentage of population decline.

The Black Death near-global pandemic of plague (caused by the bacterium *Yersinia pestis*) between the mid-1340s and 1350 was estimated to have reduced the world population from around 450-million to perhaps 350-million (although it may have been reduced even more than that). Reducing the 2011 world population by the same amount — about a quarter — through a modern equivalent of the Black Death would not even come close to bringing the world population level back to that of 1950. Hardly the end of humanity!

The most significant volume of population decline will almost certainly come from the natural evolutionary cycle which was determined by how we transformed from a rural-dominated to an urban-dominated world over the past century or so. This profoundly lowered human reproduction rates and transformed the collective psychology of societies. It has created that phenomenon which I have been calling “urban geopolitics”. But what is yet to be determined, before the world population and political/strategic structure re-stabilizes, is to what level human numbers will descend. Will they go below the 1950 levels before they start to re-build? And when will the decline plateau: 2030, 2050?

What we are dealing with in the meantime is the combination of many processes of change. During this period, our present forms of currency will transform. Why should we think that the mighty US dollar will last for another century? The *deutschmark* itself lasted only a half-century, despite the strength of the German economy after World War

II. If, as we alluded earlier, few people today can name even 10 percent of the countries which existed 300 years ago, even fewer could recall their currencies. A Roman *sestertius* coin is worthless today save as a curiosity.

So we had best start thinking in terms of *how power and wealth will be denominated* in the coming decades. As I noted in *The Art of Victory*: first you must define your goals as a society, based on your values, and then devise the path — a grand strategy — to achieve those goals. But first, know who you are, and know your enduring values. And it is equally important to understand the contextual terrain. What is it which drives *other* societies, and how will their plans and actions affect us?

As a result, we need to be thinking about some fundamentals, the first in this unstable environment being that there are no short- or long-term guarantees. Neither the collapse of the West, nor the rise of the People's Republic of China, are guaranteed. If we merely look at short-term trends, then we would only see the global population rising; if we look at longer-term trends then we see that the population growth rates are reaching an apogee and will, statistically, soon lead to decline, even under the most growth-oriented estimates. Why, then, look at merely short-term or superficial indicators of strategic outlook? It was considered in 1991 that the collapse of the USSR meant that the resultant Russian Federation would take a half-century to recover and rebuild. Despite this pessimism, Russia had again become a major factor in global affairs within two decades, albeit without the military weight of the former Soviet Union, but with greater economic viability than existed under the Soviets. The PRC's economic and strategic growth began, in real terms, with the assumption of power of Deng Xiaoping in 1978, just more than three decades ago, as I write this.

Things can move more rapidly than anticipated. The PRC, particularly in the first decade of the 21st Century, worked assiduously to build a balanced internal economy, and to avoid dependence solely on the export of cheap manufactures. Its management-oriented leadership in the post-Deng era has done a unique and creditable job in securing the PRC's destiny through the achievement of greater balance than it had ever seen in the previous century. Nonetheless, to feed physical and social needs generated by the creation of economic growth, the PRC has temporarily exposed itself to enormous imbalance: a dependence on imported food, resources, and technology.

The PRC was, by 2012, absolutely dependent on the maintenance of stability in international resource and food prices. It had already begun to build a transition from imported to domestic science and technology, not that knowledge is ever long containable within borders. In the same way, of course, the global economy became dependent on the stability of the PRC as a market and as a source of funds, even without any transparency in the PRC's currency. Mutual hostages; mutual victims. US and European food prices — as well as PRC food prices — were, even by 2011, escalating in direct proportion to the PRC's imports, for example.

What has been historically clear is that no state can be, or remain, a major power unless it is the producer of a net surplus in foodstuffs. Similarly, any state which is dependent on another for essentials of life has placed its sovereignty in jeopardy (and as well as food, we must consider water, energy, resources, protection, etc.). The PRC has consciously gambled on putting itself in this position, and, like the British Empire of the 19th Century, has taken steps to ensure that it can politically or physically dominate and intimidate the major sources of supply of its imported essentials.

The clear objective of the PRC must be to end this obvious vulnerability as quickly as possible, consistent with maintaining sufficient economic growth as to ensure quiescence (and productivity) within its home population. As a result, it must use strategic maneuver, bluff, deception, and direct intimidation to ensure that nothing arises which, in the near-term, could place it on the defensive.

This process of necessity includes attempting to build and deploy the tools of strategic power projection as quickly as possible. Such tools — and the attendant cultures to operate them — cannot be built rapidly. As a result, the PRC must work toward a stable and unthreatening global context for the foreseeable future. Any breakdown in this relative peace would force the PRC — as the great wars did to the big powers in 1914 and 1939 — to halt the process of planned growth and to fight with the resources available to its home territories at that time.

Thus, for the PRC, fighting small wars, preferably by proxy or indirectly (without physical conflict, as Sun-tzu would urge), are the only forms of conflict which would be acceptable to Beijing in the coming decade or two. Demonstrating a deterrence and power projection capability, however, is the essential *umbrella* which the PRC must create and project if it is to have the maneuvering ability to conduct informal levels of competition globally to achieve its objectives.

The US, on the other hand, needs to sustain its own strategic power projection capabilities as its own umbrella to allow it the time to rebuild its exhausted economic, war-fighting, and industrial capabilities. By 2012, all which was visible of US intentions was the fact that Pres. Barack Obama had left undisguised his wish for the US to retire from the global commons so that he could divide up the booty of a century of wealth creation. That attitude would

almost certainly change with the next iteration of US leadership. Fearful of loss, or embarrassed at the loss of its self-perceived identity, many in the US will push for a revival of US efficiencies and global assertion.

The question for them would be how they could achieve this. And in what kind of world would they be functioning? And could this be achieved without clearing away the detritus of the matured system which led, in the first place, to the peaking of US strategic power?

The US would need to work beneath the strategic power projection umbrella it had created in the 20th Century, and — like the PRC — fight small, indirect, and contained conflicts until it could afford to even consider accepting battle on a larger scale. For this to work, the US must address the credibility as well as the viability of its strategic forces, the greatest potency of which is apparent only in the restraint of their use. Power unleashed is power spent. It is power constrained and fecund which exercises itself on the minds of its audience.

It has been said that silence is strength; all else is weakness. Similarly, the *vision and myth* of strategic power is credible. The *use* of strategic power demonstrates weakness and often highlights its hollowness. There is no resiling from a reality once it is demonstrated; its use lays bare the greatest power in the inventory. When it is used, there is no more myth, and the fear of it subsides.

Wars, then, during the emerging interregnum must be fought discreetly and at arm's length.

The interregnum will be over when a new power demonstrably emerges. Until then, we must muddle through a period of balance-of-power politics, a far more delicate affair than the blunt trauma of Cold War bipolarism to which we had been accustomed. Ethiopian history had such a period, internally in the squabbling constituent kingdoms of the

empire between 1769 and 1855 CE. It was called the *Zemane Mesafint*: the era of judges and princes.

It was an age in which there was no emperor to define the laws of society. An interregnum.

We knew, or should have known, it would come to this. Spengler saw it in the first two decades of the 20th Century, and noted: “*World-city and province* — the two basic ideas of every civilization — bring up a wholly new form-problem of History, the very problem that we are living through today with hardly the remotest conception of its immensity. In place of a world, there is *a city, a point*, in which the whole life of broad regions is collecting while the rest dries up. In place of a type-true people, born of and grown on the soil, there is a new sort of nomad, cohering unstably in fluid masses, the parasitical city-dweller, traditionless, utterly matter-of-fact, regionless, clever, unfruitful, deeply contemptuous of the countryman and especially that highest form of countryman, the country gentleman. This is a very great stride towards the inorganic, towards the end — what does it signify?”²

We need now to become accustomed to *our* interregnum, and the fate of our “world-cities”, because it is new to us all. We are, as we increasingly discover, strangers in a strange land.

2 Spengler, Oswald: *The Decline of the West*. Written between 1910 and 1917, and first published in Germany in 1918. This from The Modern Library Edition from Random House, New York.

II

We Are All Strangers in a Strange Land

TWILIGHT STEALS UPON THE EARTH beneath a darkening sky. It is the blustery gloaming of an entire age. Sullen, heavy airs are contemplative; restive with the fevers of anxiety, hope. We are caught, vulnerable upon an empty moor, as the deluge of uncertainty opens upon us. But these are just the gathering clouds before the storm. Most people are afraid — well, at least harbor an uneasy concern — that great changes are afoot. And we fear, above all else, the unknown. It is our fear of darkness all grown up.

It is not just that we are at a crest of a wave of human development, bobbing atop a roiling, turgid sea — a Sargasso — of achievement, learning, laws, and structures: physical and mental. A heaving mass which is congealed into a vicious viscosity by our millennia of detritus. All our good and bad has built together. There is that, yes; and there is also the reality that this ponderous wave is about to break, just as some great currents of history are also coming to a confluence.

Our ability, in what we call the “modern world” — the enlightened beacon cities — to cope, and to flex with the changes, is minimized by that heavy viscosity of our societies. We have become locked into an aspic which we call democracy, although history has shown democracy to be many things. What we today call democracy is mostly a set-

tling into the unstable, torpid Pleistocene tarpits of rivalry between near-equal factions of society. Thus emerges the great, unhappy struggle between one group over its rival, and the resulting inevitability that “democracy” becomes the tyranny of the marginal majority over the marginal minority.

Thus, too, is our happiness uncertain and our unhappiness tinged with a resentment which plots revenge.

So where in the world can we find stability and peace? It is a question which once, perhaps even quite recently, could have found many a ready answer. And when can it be found? These are questions which bespeak a time of simmering turmoil, even in the absence of the titanic clangor of arms.

The world appears mainly at peace. By the standards of the two World Wars, at least. Even by the standards of the formal — but largely non-kinetic; that is, a conflict without, or with few, explosive weapons — Cold War. Yet the world is unstable, and we cannot readily say when stability will return. Moreover, the shape of the world, when it briefly settles at some indeterminate time in the future, will be formed by a very different architecture than it has today. Perhaps it is not war which is shaping us, but the natural forces of competition, of atrophy, of zeal, and all the other forces of nature.

Peace, then, is not merely the absence of war. Neither is it the presence of a seemingly perpetual uncertainty and an inexorably grinding path of change which appears beyond the grasp of individuals or governments.

These questions of where we can find peace and when we may find it, motivate growing numbers of the world’s societies, and not just those fearing for their way of life — even their lives — in ravaged lands. It also mesmerizes those leading comparatively privileged lives, who fear the col-

lapse of the modern, wealthy states in which they live.

On the one hand, there is an urge by those in dysfunctional societies to survive, and to seek a life of greater opportunity for their embattled families. On the other, there is a fear that a way of life is under siege and must be preserved.

This is not a new dilemma. My friend, the scholar and onetime diplomatic minister, Dr Assad Homayoun, reminds me of how, on September 25, 1830, after arriving in London as the Ambassador of France, the legendary statesman and politician, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, the First Prince de Bénévent, asked his old colleague and host, the Duke of Wellington — then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom — if he could suggest where in the world an old man might retire in peace and security. The Duke thought seriously for some moments, and then replied: “No, Prince; by God, I can’t.”³

We can imagine the uneven waves of bleakness and hope which swept over Europe even as the Industrial Revolution was transforming societies. Charles Dickens opened his 1859 book, *A Tale of Two Cities*, about the early years of the French Revolution, more than a half-century earlier, with the words: “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity ...” He could have been speaking of the early 21st Century.

Looking back, we can see that the crescendo of population transformation — growth, urbanization, wealth creation, literacy, and political participation — had yet to reach its apex. It is now reaching that apex. It is reaching its apogee, the moment before descent. But descent into what? We will not know that until, late in this century, people look back and see what our present era meant.

3 Brinton, Crane: *The Lives of Talleyrand*. New York, 1936: W. W. Norton & Co.

We can derive lessons and comfort by understanding the social evolution of the late 18th through the early 21st centuries. We know that we need to make our way through another period of great uncertainty. This should enable us to prepare for any eventuality.

It should be clear to us by now that while neither peace nor outright war represent the natural state of mankind, it is absolutely the case that competition is our natural condition. History — and life — is rarely determined by clear choices, but by the confluence of trends and context.

In other words, to make any sound policy, or sound decisions about our situation, we must first be absolutely clear about where we are situated in the strategic context. My close friend and colleague, Prince Ermias Selassie, the grandson of Emperor Haile Selassie I, of Ethiopia, recounted a lesson his grandfather gave him about the time in exile of the Imperial Court during World War II, in Bath, in England. The Emperor said: “To be in exile is to be as a gazelle, living in a land of lions. For the gazelle to imagine himself a lion is a fatal mistake. For the gazelle to think of himself as a gazelle is also fatal.”

Understand your context, and act appropriately. The lesson applies equally to all people in times of change. To be in a new era, or to be in transition to it, is the same as being in exile. It is to be removed from that which was familiar, and ends all expectations of once-guaranteed status and privilege in one’s own home. Change makes us all strangers in a strange land.

The questions to which we seek answers, then, include the matter of when the world’s human population numbers will be enough to satisfy the present natural cycle. And when will they then begin the fall from the apogee which we now rapidly approach? The answer promises to be some time in the very near future, within the next decade or two,

or possibly three. When will the average wealth of humans on the planet also reach its apogee and begin a decline? The answer to that will almost certainly be sooner than the peaking of human population numbers.

There are sound arguments to support these contentions. The real questions, however, are those which seek to understand the ramifications of these trends; to understand what happens when the natural historical cycles say that we have, for the time being, reached enough humans on the planet; when the economic cycles have given us enough wealth, and so on. If we wish to challenge these mega-trends, then we must understand what they are, and then formulate strategies to bend the outcomes to our desire.

But we are all, to some extent, out of our element. We are all gazelles in a land of lions. Those who think that merely by virtue of their pedigree or sense of entitlement they are lions may be the first to be eaten, because their weakness will be the first exposed. And those who insist that they are helpless gazelles will certainly be eaten because they have invited the lions to the feast. Only the flexible, determined, and most aware will survive. And they may be the lions who pretended to be gazelles.

This is a book which is designed to help us all, lions and gazelles alike, find a path through our present and preoccupying chaos to regain those broad, sunlit uplands.

To put the words of Prime Minister Winston Churchill, in his June 18, 1940, speech to the British House of Commons, into a new light: “[W]e are in the preliminary stage of one of the greatest battles in history ... If we can stand up to him [Hitler], all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands. But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink

into the abyss of a new Dark Age, made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science.”

As always, we struggle for order over chaos. Order, however, does not necessarily represent progress, or even prosperity and happiness. Much less does it guarantee survival. And chaos does not necessarily spell disaster. Often it breaks open the stagnant frameworks which have been inhibiting progress or which reflect the natural state of a society. Philosophers have grappled, mathematically and logically, since the age of Hellenism and the works of Sun-tzu — and particularly since the Renaissance — with the unpredictability of life. We have seen humanity enter periods of non-linear evolution, as we are now experiencing. Now it’s getting interesting, and our mathematical tools are better than they were when Geraldo Cardiano, the mathematician, tackled the matter in the early 1500s, just as our intelligence models are now more globally capable than they were when Cardiano’s contemporary, Niccolò Machiavelli, worked on his theories.

Much of our ability to cope lies in understanding and computing as many factors as possible within the context which affects us. The critical part of the equation, however (even knowing all the facts and computing the possibilities), lies in wisdom, understanding, and the innate decisiveness we acquire, or are born into.

We have seen these “computational models” come to our aid throughout history, to assist societies in the achievement of victory: the goal of long-term prosperity and dominance. Sun-tzu gave us just such a great example, in 500 BCE, of the kind of “emotional mathematics” designed to give *virtú*, the essence of insight and virile decisiveness (in the original Italian meaning), needed to mount the chaos while it gallops amongst us, and then turn the herd to com-

mon purpose.

If we are skilled and confident, however, we should find a balance of order and chaos, and this will give us the creativity and optimism we need to triumph. But what we will find, too, is yet another world.

III

Flying With Confidence Into Change

*Ah, Love! Could thou and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not we shatter it to bits — and then
Re-mold it nearer to the Heart's Desire!*

— Verse LXXIII, *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám*,
First Translation, by Edward FitzGerald

WE AWAKEN TO FIND THE WORLD which last night wrapped us with familiarity is now alien, at least to some degree. Change, it seems, came in the darkness, and we arose unprepared.

Indeed, for much of the world, no strategic change in the world of the past six decades appeared to be more profound than the seemingly sudden decline of the United States and the West. We forget the transformative nature of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990-91. But the sudden decline of the US and the West, like the partial collapse of the Russian and Soviet empire, were, in fact, a long time in coming. Only their clarity was sudden. Still, the “public unveiling” of this pivotal event — the strategic decline of the US and West as a consequential follow-on to the collapse of the Sovietized Russian Empire — has excited enormous debate on every aspect of US and Western policy and val-

ues. Yet the question of why the US and the West should have shed their century or two of absolute global dominance so rapidly has not truly been asked. Nor whether the US or the Western world could grasp back their luminance, and, as Omar Khayyám suggests, “Re-mold it nearer to the Heart’s Desire”.

What slipped by unnoticed — or at least unconnected — has been the reality that the world itself had by the second decade of the 21st Century become profoundly, structurally different than it was even a half-century earlier. It was change on a scale, and of a type, never seen before. So it was not a cyclic return of a trend. At least not a human trend, but it was a cycle familiar to nature. Human numbers had, by 2012, since 1950 almost trebled with lightning speed to unprecedented proportions, and, at the same time, more than half the people of the world had moved into urban areas. We heard the statistics and shrugged. But even that shrug bespoke our new attitude, our new mentality. That was the unprecedented event: our tipping as a global population into urbanization and urban dominance.

Already, by the 21st Century, we thought as urban beings. This now-dominant trait has changed everything.

It is time, then, to look more broadly about where the world is going, and why the path to US — and Western — recovery will have to embrace an understanding of the convergence of still further dramatic trends; issues which cannot be addressed by mere incremental changes to the old approaches to governance. To understand where the US and the West are going — and may go, given the totally new human global context — it is first necessary to step back and look at that broader array of factors. It is also time to look, with equal rigor, at where the non-Western societies may go. It is not axiomatic that when one rises another must fall, but it is true that some paths lead to greater suc-

cess than others.

So we must seriously ask what paths will human society next wander? How did we reach this confluence of destiny? What can we do to command our own fate into the future? Do we live in an irretrievably ruined world, or a world which is only now beginning to blossom with possibilities? Do the gods of our fathers live still? Or are we now so different from our human ancestors as the Late Cretaceous Velociraptor was from the archosaurs and prototypical dinosaurs of the Triassic period, a mere 160-million years before? Have we become, in fact, *Kleptosaurus Rex*, an efficient feeding beast, fundamentally different from our ancestors? Or are our underlying characteristics merely disguised by transitory adaptation to a new world of human skills and unprecedented human numbers?

We are now at a pivotal point in history.

We are, in fact, at the edge, the end stage, of a phase of human population growth. Human population levels should be expected to drop rapidly and massively within the coming two or three decades. This is very much a cycle attributable to our modernism: our success, our wealth, and our urbanization. The results will be profound.

As a corollary to this, the nature of the nation-state has become altered — particularly the Western or so-called “advanced societies” — by that massive tide of people who continue to flow from hinterlands into the cities. This great migration has now reached the point where “national” decisionmaking, identities, priorities, and capabilities have become distorted and removed from the comprehensive direct relationship which mankind had traditionally had with the land and sea. We are seeing a real return, in some respects, to the importance of geopolitics, but the reality that this is a new geopolitics has yet to dawn on the policy communities of most “advanced” states. To understand the

“new geopolitics”, it is vital to first understand the “old geopolitics”.

It is likely that those nation-states which understand and practice classical geopolitics — which stresses, among other things, a balance of geography to sustain inherent control over the resources and capabilities needed to sustain true sovereignty — will ultimately live to witness the humbling of the new City States. For now, what we are witnessing is the flowering of the new City States as the dominant global powers, much as they dominated the Hellenic sphere of antiquity or the Italian Peninsula in the 15th and 16th centuries. But this current situation, this urban dominance, applies — indeed, as it did in ancient Greece and Renaissance Italy — only in the absence of more global, or at least more broadly-evident, catastrophic events or great challenge. Summer’s life hath all too short a lease. All flowers die. And from the earth grow new tendrils.

We have, in the modern world, appeared to have abandoned respect for societal hierarchy. This has been perhaps the most profound example of the new urbanization; the most important break with the natural hierarchy-building which has been the hallmark of all creatures since they emerged from the primordial slime. This disregard, or sidelining, of respect for hierarchy has not yet reached the status of anomie — lawlessness — in many states, but it has transformed into that which Plato feared most about democracy: ochlocracy (mob rule), and the demands for gratification which are the hallmarks of all mobs.

Indeed, although consumerism appeared at first to be a true perpetual motion engine — creating markets, which created jobs, creating wealth, creating consumption — consumerism ultimately undermined social hierarchies. It became a voracious and insatiable beast. It became the mob.

Although the scale is new, because of our urban dominance, this is not something peculiar to our own urban societies of the 21st Century. It is a cyclic stage in the maturation — and eventual atrophy — of the social structure. The surging crowd is part of “creative destruction”. It is merely an unpleasant and disorienting phase. Mobs are always part of a transitional process, but — as Machiavelli warned — the sooner order is restored, the sooner the greater good is served. Mobs, we should be clear, are not necessarily comprised of extremists; most of them are “followers”, average members of society incapable of leadership action. Mob members zealously calling for new political discipline, become, because of fear and uncertainty, more passionate than their leaders, who remain cool.

The reality is that the “societal hierarchy” we have built in flowing and ebbing waves over the past thousand years — with echoes in even more distant millennia — evolved from that mixed town-and-country balance of society. A new hierarchical structure, every bit as rigid as the old, will emerge. It is already emerging. The question is whether a totally urban-dominated hierarchy can reflect and cherish the balance of needs of a society if the areas which provide food and raw materials are relegated to a position of little or no importance.

So, then, can a state exist if the people in it do not feel that they are bound to share its broad expanse of duties — spread across the productive plains and bountiful seas as well as its cities of learning and command — including its identity and its benefits? The answer may well be yes, but it is at this point that the nature of the state can be seen to transform, and the state itself acts as a separate entity from the population. Its objective becomes the enforcement of compliance from its population, and minimizing the opportunity for thought and actions not controlled by the

state. We move, then, from the vision of democracy which was envisaged by those who drafted the US Constitution, Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence of the United States — as the prototype, in many ways, of the “modern” democratic nation-state — and even away from the populist view of democracy of the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

The transition was foretold by Plato, who said that the democratic electorate would ultimately become a mob, more interested in sating greed and immediate desires — its “rights” and “entitlements” — than in the long-term collective good. The transition of the populace also makes inevitable the transition of leadership to autocracy: Cæsarism, Bonapartism — call it what you will — and statism.

This process toward the dominance of the state is easiest to achieve when the majority of people feel that their safety lies in compliance and obedience; and they fear more than any other thing the heartbeat of different dreams. Thus do the majority of people in a society reject freedom, even wealth and nobility of thought, to throw themselves at the mercy of the state, giving its leaders more than they demand, swearing to all falsehoods in order to show fealty: In order to sustain the protection and unity of their society. They do so knowing that the state and its leadership will demand that, for the greater good, they offer their lives in its defense.

As with all species — almost all — they unconsciously obey the laws that many may perish, but enough of their bloodline will survive to repopulate the earth. All principle, all wealth, all power, all learning will be sacrificed without thought to this goal. If most will slavishly comply, then, the path to survival and dominance lies with leaders who cannot or will not explain their actions, for explanations often cause fear. Thus they act with mystery and secrecy.

The great fear, then, is that the militancy — what we today call “political correctness”, which *de facto* builds new hierarchies — which societies willingly and compulsively generate will compound rather than correct any trends toward social and economic chaos, collapse, and reorganization of human society. We demand certainty and hierarchical structure, even at the cost of our welfare and our lives.

Is such a path inevitable? To quote Charles Dickens’ evocative character, Ebenezer Scrooge, in the 1843 book, *A Christmas Carol*, speaking with the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come: “Men’s courses will foreshadow certain ends, to which, if persevered in, they must lead,” said Scrooge. “But if the courses be departed from, the ends will change. Say it is thus with what you show me!”

It may be thus. We may be able to change the “certain ends” now foreshadowed. But to do so, we must explore how we may depart from our present courses.

In all of this we can see that linear extrapolations of our recent experience can take us only so far. Even our “descent into chaos” — which appears to move us from a seemingly linear to a random phase of human development — is a phenomenon which has mirrors in the repeating patterns of history and nature.

Permit me one more chapter to frame the unknown which faces us, and to make it more manageable. Let me explain why there are no real surprises — no “black swan” events — which should provide concern.

IV

Flying With Black Swans

SO BE NOT ALARMED: THIS IS NOT A MESSAGE bereft of hope. It is just a tale of what was, what is, and what may be. Whatever prescriptives which may emerge will arise from our understanding of the mosaic of our context. All tales, all life, are a balance of happiness and trial. Our journey is, as all good parents tell us, what we make of it. It is only when other people or other circumstances determine what it is our path must be — when we become dependent, supplicant, or mendicant — that we are governed by hopelessness and fear. We will, by the end of this tale, see where hope may be found and grasped. So be patient, and suspend judgment, for what at first seems threatening may be that which saves us. And some of that to which we cling may be our nemesis.

But, for the moment, we, in our castles of plenty, live increasingly with stewing neuroses of fear, uncertainty, and pessimism. Moats of decisive confidence which once surrounded our cocoon castles — our great cities and pretensions — no longer defend against the enemy. The enemy has already crossed into our own minds. Most likely the foe arose there, in the confined but fertile vacuity created by the wealth and hoarded, jumbled accumulation of laws and customs built over centuries. It is an insecurity which dwells in the detritus of a civilization maturing into frailty;

a civilization built from the cocoon of the earlier classical age which was the evolution of a maturing culture or agglomeration of cultures.

It was modern civilization's abundance, that wealth, which caused thought, reason, and the leadership borne of experience to be set aside as being no longer of any account. It was that cobweb of accumulated practices, privileges, and heavily-invested social architecture which bound us, and made us unable to move with the nimble energy of our youth. We lost that energy with which we might build anew.

Wealth began to permeate societies, and build great cities, with the Second Industrial Revolution. This in itself was the result of the evolution of our numerical system and mathematics — a process still evolving — which turned culture and the classical age into an increasingly *quantifiable* age of civilization, and therefore an age of expansion in all material and spatial forms. The modern world (East and West, but prompted by the West) is at a junction point in a long process of a constantly growing — but poorly-defined — obsession with “rights” (entitlements). This had its origins with the halting, but consistent, rise in global prosperity which began with the early stages of the Second Industrial Revolution (1700-1900). Thus, a butterfly flutters its wings in 18th Century Britain and a *tsunami* engulfs the world in the early 21st Century. Managing the now-overwhelming sense of entitlement in what we call modern democracies has become, because of the power of a comprehensive, but ill-informed electorate, an exercise in mob control, and an opportunity for populist demagoguery.⁴

4 See Copley, Gregory R.: “2010: The Short-Term Strategic Outlook; Beyond the Statements”, in *Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis*, January 28, 2010. That report cited an earlier comment by the writer, in a report on March 20, 2009, which noted: “The ‘professional politician’ will morph into new forms of Caesarism or Bonapartism. This is already underway, as ‘leaders’ with no practical experience of the world increasingly fear the uncertainties of markets and the confidence of those who can actually create, manage, and build. Thus, the ‘new socialism’ is a system built by leaders who demand central control of societies and who

Here is how the Great, Victorious, Civilized Peoples have begun to defeat themselves.

Yet it need not be so.

Victory and defeat are not preordained. They originate, as the great strategic philosopher, Stefan Possony, my teacher for a quarter-century, reminded us, in the mind, and are determined by vision and willpower, or the lack thereof. It is true that human minds, when they operate as a collective society, also respond collectively to threats, to wealth, to starvation. Thus societies evolve in fairly predictable cycles (but which vary by society, according to each society's logic), and can be pushed by a range of stimuli or guidance — leadership or coercion — toward greatness or defeat. This pattern of social evolution has within it cycles of birth, growth and learning, mastery and accomplishment, and, inevitably, sclerosis and atrophy; ultimately decline and even death. As with the medical paths of individuals, surgery and exercise can transform the lives of societies. All systems of governance have their times of birth, efficacy, and distortion, leading to inefficiency, inappropriateness to the challenge, whether they be models of tyranny or forms of democracy.

Years ago, as we discussed earlier, a colleague and I coined those words “cratogenesis”, “cratocide”, and “cratometamorphosis”: the birth, murder, and transformation of nations⁵. These words describe a process of human evolution

genuinely fear freedom.” The 2010 report continued: “The new circus includes the pandering to newly-created pseudo-scientific religions, such as ‘climate change’, which have so greatly distracted governments, the media, and populations from their daily work as to have already hampered the chances for economic viability in the near future. Those, however, who live by the sword of populism — mob rule — must ultimately answer to that same fickle crowd, which, as Elias Canetti noted in *Crowds & Power*, has no mind, only wants.”

- 5 Cratogenesis and cratocide were used in *The Art of Victory*, published in 2006 [Simon & Schuster, New York]. Cratometamorphosis was introduced a few years later in the pages of the journal, *Defense & Foreign Affairs*. I worked with my friend and colleague, Professor Marios Evriviades, a Cypriot teaching in Athens, to draw upon Greek etymology to form the words to describe the phenomena I had

to which we were lately spared a view, because of the seemingly static approach to statehood which prevailed during the second half of the 20th Century. We thought the world, and its peoples and states, a static thing, though a hundred and more new states were born in that 50-year period. Some states disappeared; the global population almost trebled; and technology blurred our vision of reality. More importantly, we became satisfied, and believed that all that was important began with us in our time. We forgot the lessons of the past.

If we look, we can see that history has demonstrated scores of cycles of societal optimism which enabled entire peoples to flourish and accomplish great things: the glorious Sassanid Empire period of Persia (221 to 624 of the Common Era); the 19th Century of British flowering; the 20th Century rush of heady dominance by the United States; and possibly the 21st Century of China. There were others, such as Rome and the Hellenic and Pharaonic eras, and many more besides, large and small. Optimism is a hallmark of “identity security”⁶: the knowledge of (or belief in) who we are, and what we can do as a society; the belief in our own innate right to exist, achieve, and triumph.

It is what you do which creates optimism; it is what you take which creates pessimism and negativity. It is true for societies as it is true for individuals.

Modern society — the West, for want of a better description — has lost its optimism because it fails to think of a grand vision for the future, or to be inspired by where our earlier visions have taken us. All things have consequences which were not originally imagined or intended. The lack

in mind.

- 6 The phrase “identity security” has been co-opted to mean the security of personal identifiers, such as identity numbers and access codes to financial assets. I originally used the phrase in the late 20th Century to codify individual and societal self-awareness and historical knowledge as a key to understanding capabilities and developing confidence in the unique value of oneself and one’s own society.

of a vision has the worst consequences. As *The Art of Victory* notes: If you don't know where you're going, any road will lead to disaster. Modern — urban — society has reached that period in its life where it has allowed itself to become tired and sclerotic, overcome with lassitude. Its people think mightily of their “rights” and “entitlements”; that which it takes or believes it is owed from the common weal. It ceases to think in terms of sacrifice, common or individual achievement, or that it faces existential threat. I devised a new maxim to address this: *Preoccupation with process and means is tactical; preoccupation with outcomes and future context is strategic*. Modern humanity is preoccupied with the “process and means” — with daily life and what can be derived from it in terms of short-term gratification — rather than seeing what is necessary to achieve an appropriate outcome for self and society into the indefinite future. Yet the more we sate our immediate appetite and vanities, the more we feel fear; the more we are depressed; the less we achieve.

This is very much part of — a period in — human social evolution into urbanization. The formal, logical, and tactical response to the massive urban immigration has, in China, been to focus on sophisticated urban planning to alleviate short-term social pressures. This is essential, and yet it is a mere nostrum when serious medicine is needed. There will be natural corrective or adaptive measures to ensure human survival, but all actions have consequences. Some of these “corrective or adaptive measures” will be (and already have been, as we have seen from the wars or civil wars of the past two centuries) profound and titanic, yet we see them as a series of unrelated incidents. Witness the Greeks in the streets of Athens in 2011 and 2012, protesting the cuts in their benefits and comforts, perquisites which had been acquired on credit which was no longer

forthcoming as their productivity fell far below their desires. Crowds of the same hungry animalism will be in the streets of other societies as the story is repeated elsewhere. This is a cycle we have seen repeated down the steps of human history. [The “Occupy Wall Street” movement and its imitators arose in 2011 after I wrote this interpretation: the process moves rapidly.]

To command the path of our societies — to ensure the best possible outcome for our own particular society — we need to be able to see patterns, both historically and contextually.

It is within this framework that modern human societies have travelled a tortuous path to reach this impasse. I have, your scribe through this discussion, for most of my own life felt distanced from the world through which I have wandered: an observer of strategic patterns, rather than a participant, even though I, too, toiled in the mills. This sense of detachment aided my career as analyst, historian, cartographer of human paths, and enabled an empathy equally apportioned among all the tribes of humanity into whose presence I have stumbled. It was, perhaps, an inevitable outgrowth of the remoteness of the place of my birth — Perth, Western Australia — and my subsequent travels as a lonely savage in the marble halls of passing glory, all of which cried — as Shelley said in *Ozymandias* — “look on my works, ye mighty, and despair”.

* * *

We — my immediate kin and I — lived in serene isolation from the civilization of our forebears. We knew well the constancy of a life apart from the ancient world of Hellenas, Rome, and Britannia. Our happy loneliness amid still more ancient, nomadic peoples and strange creatures was signified by the Roaring Forties, windsweeping the exotic scent of dreamlands across the southern Indian Ocean. It

was the smell of the Cape of Good Hope, and all of Africa reaching up to the Europe of our ancestors.

We had departed from Britain under sails of hope to a new land, more than a sesquicentury before, in 1829, carrying only the books, the values, and the identity of those scores of generations whom we had left buried on a sceptered isle, now ten-thousand miles away. Now we knew the companionship of the haze of Summer, shimmering from a sparse, bruised, and sunbaked land. We knew the beauty of silence, broken only by the importance of the birds' call. Overriding every image of my childhood is the intensity of light which scarified the land and seared the colors from the dark rivers and silvered oceans. Flashing wings of the great white pelicans — which have been denied to those inhabitants of the Northern Hemisphere who must dwell with smaller, darker, and less majestic beasts — and equally stark seagulls accompanied us along the endless beaches and beneath the watch of distant, endless horizons. In the bushlands, as the sea vanished from our sight and hearing, played the sounds of the pink and grey galahs and sulfur-crested cockatoos.

But by the rivers and lakes were the great symbols of my youth; noble visages of black grace: *Cignus atratus*. Everywhere abounded these, our companions and our unique heraldic device: the black swan of Western Australia, denizen of the broad and brooding Swan River. These, too, were my brothers and sisters.

We knew — during that brief idyll of history — that we had been forgotten, and had evolved as a race apart. We were the outliers of history. We awoke, eventually, to a changed world, in which our ways seemed crude and clumsy amid the indulgence and lace of the great cities. But we had grown into adulthood surrounded by black swans and all manner of strange beasts and birds and flowers. We

coped, before the coming of other peoples to our shores, with the tedium of hardship, my ancestors more than me. There was no time for surprise at the sudden, punitive vengeance of nature. The unspoken mantra was: observe, withstand, survive, and triumph. Indeed, survival was triumph. Black swans did not signify the arrival of the unknown. The unknown was, for us, what life gave us. And many of us reveled in that intimacy, and that lack of fear of the unknown. Yet without complacency. A curiosity and an embrace of the unknown became the hallmark of our breed. And the black swan our companion.

Fear of the unknown — I learned, venturing into the world of other men who had built the great urban monuments — is one of the greatest impediments to human activity. It causes mental paralysis in some, blind obeisance to faith in many. In others, though, in entrepreneurs, leaders, and true survivors, the unknown — which is a form of freedom — can cause a surge of inquisitiveness and inventiveness: the urge to explore and know.

* * *

The 20th Century saw the culmination, in many respects, of humankind's mapping, cataloguing, and defining of each last blade of grass, each species, and each geographic feature of the earth. There was a sense that the "unknown" had been conquered, except for esoteric elements which were, nonetheless, owing fealty to human genius, merely awaiting their call to the service of mankind. Wealth grew; human progress seemed constant; and man's sense of his invincibility and divinity grew exponentially. Yet we became the architects of our own unease; disquiet beneath our superficial hubris, hiding the sense of loss of our links with something which had once made us complete. The distraction of the tangibles of the immediate, however, saw humanity, with its wealth, grow in numbers, and begin a

mass migration into urban clusters, there to hide from nature and the lessons of civilizational evolution. To hide from history.

This hiding place — the cities, removed from the cycles of crops and storms and suns and snows — became a cavern of new fears, fomenting stresses which told on the health and focus of the citizens. The cities became isolated from everything but their own increasingly abstract thoughts. There became no ability to measure threats and needs against any balanced frame of reference. A knowledge of the world disappeared in inverse proportion to the global travels and trade of individuals, who moved from one urban cocoon to another; essentially journeying merely from one “house of self-worship” to the next. But, with the teetering of economic systems, the comfort and artificial priorities of urbanity began to unravel in the early 21st Century. For many, the crumbling of the carefully constructed Babel of Urbanization shattered optimism, and engendered an even more intense fear of the unknown.

For those who favor rationalizing their situation with fatalism and faith in an inevitable durability and unbroken chain of human progress, the future can only be believed to bring better things. These are the people — the modernists, who have never looked over the shoulder of humanity — who do not acknowledge the fragility of human progress; nor do they understand its constant missteps; neither have they grasped at an understanding of the brief and tenuous twinkling brevity of human life on this planet. Others, with religious faith, pray for endurance through the fires of a world in transformation. Faith enables an individual to function and focus in a world in which the “unknowns” can be put to one side, given over to a fate decided by God, or, in the urban world, the “gods temporal”. A preoccupation with everyday routines of faith, in any event, provides great

comfort in the face of a world in change.

Those who can flourish, however, and who can lead others to safety — to Victory⁷ — have a deep love affair with the unknown, and plunge into its embrace. For them, there is no fear of black swans, in the sense that *concern* over “black swan occurrences” has become one of the sources of the great paralysis of modern society. The Lebanese-US writer, Nassim Nicholas Taleb, tried to explain seemingly inexplicable major occurrences in history or nature as “black swan events” — in his 2007 book, *The Black Swan*⁸ — citing the Roman poet, Juvenal⁹. Juvenal’s metaphor was that in a world such as Europe, in which all swans were white, a black swan was of enormous and noteworthy rarity, and perhaps inexplicable or implausible.

Taleb, then, talked of “black swan occurrences” as major events — strategic occurrences, changing the course of society — which defied predictability, and all attempts to adequately plan for them.

There are, however, no “black swan occurrences”, except in the minds of the ignorant (and it is true that we are all ignorant to greater or lesser degrees). Modern humanity, by clustering into urban masses and disregarding the lessons of balanced societies and human history, has merely lost its ability to adequately anticipate events and the actions of nature. We have become so cosseted by white swans — the “known”, in a very narrow perspective — and fearful of “unknowns”, the black swans, because they seem in our ignorance to defy predictability. We have, then, reverted — because of our now-narrowly-defined knowledge — to a people who have lost the ability to see how the world works, and how to understand our context. We look at all things

7 I describe “Victory” in my 2006 book, *The Art of Victory*, as the survival and dominance of a species or group over the elements which can impinge on its survival or independence of action.

8 Taleb, Nassim Nicholas: *The Black Swan*. Penguin Books, 2007.

9 Decimus Iunius Iuvenalis; late First and early Second centuries CE.

from our own highly-focused experiential and knowledge base, because modern society demands specialization. We become competent in narrow areas of skill or knowledge, but in the wider world we have lost our classical and broad understanding of the world, and we have again become primitives, fearful of the forest spirits and demons. We worship sun gods.

We do not fear the white swans: the narcotic comfort of our slumber in our “known world”. This is a world of slavish adherence to “accepted wisdom” and political correctness, in which dissonant voices are suppressed, ridiculed, or burned at the stake. It is necessarily so, if not desirably so. Each human society — as the great social psychologist Gustave Le Bon (*The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*) and Elias Canetti (*Crowds and Power*) remind us — demands absolute adherence to its particular fashions of behavior and belief in order to preserve unity. No matter that the politically-imposed beliefs, whether on clothing style or on matters of national survival, may be illogical: the crowd puts overwhelming and unyielding insistence on conformity so that the society remains intact.

Unfortunately, unless the direction — the fashion — is changed, absolute conformity can lead to absolute national decline. But then, the question of the *nation* — our social organization — is the thing we have to discuss. We will try to look at this a little differently in the next chapter, which may offer a more sympathetic view of the humble lemming.

V

The Lemming Syndrome and Modern Human Society

WE HAVE, WHEN LIBERATED TO THINK as individuals, been astoundingly successful and resourceful. It is only necessary to see the explosion of independent and creative thinking which the spread of literacy and books achieved following the practical development of moveable type and mass communication by Johann Gutenberg in 1450. The industrial revolution and mass urbanization and widely-distributed real wealth — and massive population growth and mobility — could not have occurred without it. [Yes, the Chinese began traveling toward moveable type and letterpress printing, and they were successful. But their language lacked the “portability” of European language and letter structures, which is one reason why the PRC Government, in the late 20th Century, introduced “simplified character” Chinese script.]

The World emerged in 1945 from its second global war, with much of modern society — solely excepting the United States among the great powers — exhausted and devastated in some way. There were vast tracts of humanity poor, hungry, and with lifespans foretold to be brief. Since

that time, growing prosperity has ensured that human numbers have almost trebled (from 2.5-billion to almost seven-billion). Such a surge in numbers and an extension of average lifespans spoke of the reality that civilization rose from the ravages of war and ensured that, by 2012, it was producing at least three times the food it had produced in 1945; made potable that much more water; and unleashed many times more energy than we needed as our fuel in 1945.

In achieving this greatness, we have increasingly and rapidly urbanized and structured our civilizations around perceptions of equity and justice which give power to majorities rather than to the few. The pleasantly ironic result has been that the heroic production of abundance in all life's true necessities — the food and the raw materials of production and energy — has been achieved by fewer and fewer people, working in remote isolation from the urban majorities. The majorities — the voting mass — sit in cities, and consume. As the King James version of the Bible notes: “Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?”¹⁰ Urban dwellers sow not; neither do they reap, nor gather into barns. Yet the rural workers feed them. Still, the votes of the rural populations count not.

We will expand on this theme as we go forward.

Human numbers, soon will crest at perhaps some 10-billion, but probably less, and begin a messy, uneven process of decline. The dramatic global *per capita* growth of wealth and urbanization between 1945 and about 2008 created and sustained that population growth. Sudden and massive population decline as a result of the Black Death — first in China, and then spreading Westward to Europe in the

¹⁰ The Bible, Book of Matthew, 6:26.

mid-14th Century — triggered a great increase in *per capita* wealth and the ability of societies to amass capital for investment.

This time, however, in the 21st Century, a different set of outcomes is likely. Urban property values, with diminished demand, will decline. And property value underpins the modern process of credit and capital turnover. Capital turnover accelerates wealth appreciation in modern, urban life.

The world, within the first half of the 21st Century, is, however, likely to be vastly different and more challenging than anything humanity has faced since the Dark Ages, with different values, processes, and priorities.

Human numbers may decline, in this cycle, by half; even more. There are so many factors at play that it is not possible to forecast accurately. Even at that level, the population of the world would still be double that of 1950 (when it was 2.5-billion). We will discuss the reasons behind the population surge and decline shortly, but let us accept that the contraction of populations and therefore property values in urban centers would so dramatically undercut the key basis of our modern wellbeing — wealth, measured in abstracts of cash and credits, and largely leveraged against the perceived or psychological value of physical property (real estate) — that there would be less wealth (however it is defined) for investment in medical sciences, in industrial production, and even in the ability to distribute or produce sufficient food. This would compound human competition for survival, accelerate the return to xenophobic nationalism, and bring with it war or social shapings based on the fear of war. We would dwell in poorer circumstances than our grandparents would have accepted. Most of the human population would revert — as in many respects we are already reverting — to being unthinking followers: can-

non fodder or worse, neglected and meaningless.

Is it necessary that we move along this path? Are we lemmings that we should march to such a fate, unthinking?

Calico-hued creatures of the beautiful clan *Lemmus lemmus*, could they but articulate their views, might well protest the slander of human society that lemmings blindly and unthinkingly rush headlong to commit mass suicide and to risk the very existence of their species.

They do not.

Lemmings, of the Kingdom of Animalia, the Class of Mammalia and Order of Rodentia, the Family of Cricetidae, and so on down to their Tribe of Lemmini, live mostly near the Arctic in tundra homes, and are — despite their size of between an ounce and four ounces (30 to 112 grams) — apparently imbued with as much mystery to humans as their Arctic companion, Santa Claus.

It is true that the populations of lemmings fluctuate wildly, often to the point of near-extinction, but it is not a willing suicide which drives them to seemingly jeopardize their species survival. Yet humans think of lemmings as creatures which stare into the existential folly of their ways and willingly embrace death. It is ironic (and perhaps apt), then, that it is the human race which stares at the future and appears to embrace self destruction rather than to choose paths more guaranteed to ensure societal survival.

Lemmings, robbed of the power of dominance over their surroundings and the voice to express their observations (even if they could know and judge humanity), would themselves ridicule the Human Syndrome. Lemmings, had they control over their surroundings, would not surge and decline in numbers so wildly. But they have no control over the factors which cause their societies to peak and plummet. Human societies, we choose to believe, *do* have this power; this ability to control the survival of their species.

In looking at where human society is going in the 21st Century and beyond, it is appropriate to harken to the manmade myth of the lemming; at how lemmings supposedly make conscious decisions to commit mass suicide when, logic would tell us, they should not. But the lemming nonetheless serves as an example of how human societies — just as lemmings and rabbits and kangaroos — grow in numbers when food is plentiful, and decline in numbers when it is not. As the beautiful *Lemmus lemmus* clan of lemmings go, so, too, do we. Even though we have supposedly greater awareness of our situation and greater command of our fate.

As with all living things, our purpose and genetic drive is to survive as a species, and to adapt and grow. But history has shown that we are no more in command of our own response to global conditions — the hothouse of our survival — than the lemming. We are merely better at tool-building, including the construction of the tools of thought and logic. When these tools are employed individually or in limited groups, survival is possible. Collectively — as a species — however, we tend to act without recourse to thought and logic, and merely follow mass instinct and pack leaders. We gorge ourselves on the available food, and despair and die when it is gone. We do not save ourselves.

The agricultural and industrial revolutions were the products of small groups of people, essentially the creation of what we now call entrepreneurship. They led to efficiencies which saw the production of food surpluses; of the movement of water to where it was needed; and the ability for those not needed to find or produce food to gather in the social groupings of towns and cities. Even the productivity of the towns and cities in creating tools for the betterment of societies became so efficient that we could tolerate — even encourage — large elements of the population

moving merely into a new purpose and, for that segment, their real new vocation was consumption.

It is necessary to comprehend the phenomenon of urbanization as a trend which began with the first human steps toward organized agriculture some 10,000 years ago, a mere flash of time in the evolution of our species over millions of years. Organized agriculture permitted humans to abandon a nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle, and to create villages. And as agriculture increased in efficiency and reliability, it enabled the production of foodstuffs with fewer people, releasing some for activities not immediately related to individual survival. And yet it took millennia for the production of foods to reach such proportions that cycles of drought and famine could be withstood.

The capability to achieve guaranteed, stable food surpluses year-in and year-out is a process — as yet incomplete — which reached Western Europe only in the past 500 or so years. The introduction of the potato from what is now Peru in the 16th Century enabled the production of a source of food which could sustain Europe through the climate variations which had led, literally, to “feast or famine” for centuries. Rome’s earlier widespread geographic empire had also enabled some guarantees of stable food supply, given its ability to circumvent famine. It was the loss of this core food stability which helped bring the viability of the Roman Empire to an end.

For modern Europe, though, the introduction of the potato — the key to the success of the Inca powers over centuries — started the process of stable economic growth, and freed more and more people to live in towns and cities, engaged in non-agricultural work. This was compounded more dramatically by the introduction to Western Europe of guano fertilizer in the 19th Century, also mainly (originally) from Peru. This compounded the yields and reliabil-

ity of crops, a process compounded by the development of other, often hydrocarbon-related, fertilizers. And to this was added the introduction of new and more productive crops. Australia was, from the 18th Century onwards, to rely increasingly on wheat modified through breeding to suit the Continent's particular soils and climate, and from the breeding of hardier species of sheep, such as the fine-wool producing Australian Merino — derived from the Spanish Merino — which brought great wealth to the newly-Europeanized Australian colonies.

India, languishing in perpetual cycles of poverty and famine, began to prosper only in 1986, when the impact of the introduction of short-stem wheat — replacing the more vulnerable long-stem varieties — became apparent, creating grain surpluses. It took little time for the creation of food surpluses in India to translate into the freeing of agricultural workers for city employment, and then on to the creation of industrial and financial surpluses.

The legacy of the Inca experimentation with the breeding of edible potato types thus transformed how the modern world began the move from countryside to cities.

By the early 21st Century, the bulk of humanity lived in towns or cities — becoming, in another word, urbanized — and contributed nothing to the survival of the species. Some were ornamental, and it is true that there are aspects of ornamentation which give light to creative thinking and assist in the development of human tools and logic. And yet, to validate the existence (because we biologically are impelled by the need for purpose) of the mass of urban society, *consumption* became regarded as a great good in its own right, and was measured equally in “gross domestic product” alongside the production of food and the tools with which humanity conquered its natural adversaries.

By 2010, some 70 percent of the \$14.3694-trillion US

gross domestic product (GDP) was defined by consumption, including monies funneled through government to cover medical costs of individuals. At the same time, individual worker productivity in the US in 2009 declined, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), by more than a half-percent. Meanwhile, manufacturing in the People's Republic of China in 2008 represented 32 percent of GDP (compared with 13 percent for the manufacturing component of the US GDP in 2008). Ten percent of the PRC's GDP was derived in 2009 — according to the World Bank — from value-added agricultural production (compared with less than one percent of the US GDP). Certainly, these are just headline comparisons. However, the trends include the reality that the feeling of wellbeing of a society can be measured by the percentage of its economy devoted to consumption. Of course, consumption is necessary; the question is how much consumption aids long-term strategic strength and durability. What this means is that the ability of a society to be in full control of its own destiny depends on how much balance it can achieve between food production, control of essential (and desirable) raw materials, manufacturing, infrastructure, and the ability to secure all of its survival interests.

In 2011, some \$2-trillion of that \$14-trillion US GDP was ascribed to the value of private homes. [And even that estimate may be half the figure of a few years earlier, but the real 2011 figure may also be nothing like the \$2-trillion estimate of 2011.] What is easy to forget as we see this commendable estimation of the value of this aspect of personal wealth in the United States is that *value itself* is a psychological attribute, based on *trust* and *demand*, caused by the *desirability* — all psychological attributes — of the assets. And the asset value itself is denominated by money, which

is itself an artificial or intellectual construct: an abstract representation of value and trust (particularly since all major currencies had moved away, by the late 20th Century, from linkages to holdings of gold and silver, which are themselves artificially valued and denominated).¹¹

In the 1999-2012 period, we saw the perceived “value” of US private and commercial real estate decline in most areas of the country. Then we saw the “value” of US currency — that which denominates or measures the value of the real estate — also decline in comparison to many other currencies. All of these psychological constructs of value, then, combined to determine whether families prospered or starved, and whether the US state had the capacity to prosecute its ambitions and needs. If the US housing market example of the link between trust and asset and currency values does not illustrate how psychological factors determine strategic — and survival — outcomes, then what does?

The tendency of modern (largely urban) theorists has been to posit society moving toward a “post-industrial”

11 The delicate question of currency worth was brought into textbook clarity when, in 1998, Eritrea introduced its national currency, the *nakfa*, five years after the territory became independent from Ethiopia. Eritrea is formed from the former Ethiopian territory of Eritrea, plus other coastal areas which were traditionally Ethiopian; in total, they took all of Ethiopia's coastal access to the Red Sea, making Ethiopia dependent on Eritrea as a transit zone for its trade. Eritrea automatically, then, became the fourth largest coffee exporter in the world, despite the fact that all the coffee it exported was grown in Ethiopia. In 1998, Eritrea informed Ethiopia that it would no longer pay for the coffee to be transshipped in hard currencies or Ethiopian *birr*, but payments would henceforth be paid in *nakfa*. Significantly, the currency was also named for the town of Nakfa in the Sahel mountains, the town which was the center of armed Eritrean resistance over many years against Ethiopia. Apart from that Eritrean insult to the neighbors on whom they depended, the Ethiopians knew that the *nakfa* was also a non-negotiable currency on the world market, and therefore refused payment in the Eritrean currency. Eritrea thought that Ethiopia had no option but to comply, but Ethiopia instead re-opened rail and road links with Djibouti — and later the Somaliland port of Berbera — and began channeling its exports through non-Eritrean ports. The result was that Eritrea lost its overwhelmingly most important source of revenue and wealth. By 2012, its currency remained essentially worthless, having no backing of substance. Had it built trust in the currency before making its *démarche* against Ethiopia, Eritrea today would be a viable and relatively wealthy nation-state.

status: a position in which a nation-state would not need to engage in industrial manufacture at all. That, of course, is beyond utopian in that it would imply that the production of food and manufactures is geographically and in terms of security *outside* the territory and control of the nation-state or society. Such a situation would automatically place the society vulnerable to the dictates of supplier states, or expose their supply lines to interception or diversion. That, then, defines that such a state is not, indeed, sovereign; it is subordinate to the control of others.

Most thinking in post-Cold War urban societies is that “globalization” has rendered the traditional views of sovereignty obsolete, on the basis that wars could never again occur between societies which are economically interlinked. History has repeatedly shown this thinking to be fallacious, just as it has shown all forms of war and peace to be transitory. Thus the process of outsourcing supply of essentials of food, resources (including energy raw materials), and manufactures reaches a point at which sovereignty is compromised. And sovereignty will soon — as we will discuss — come roaring back into fashion as the world’s architecture adjusts to new realities. Even by 2010, the signs were already well advanced as protectionism of trade and industry began to be advocated even in many “free market” economies.

The brief holiday in the late 1990s and early 2000s of “globalization” — so similar to the globalization introduced by Genghis Khan in the 12th and 13th centuries — caused many “modern” societies to abandon the strict regimen of balance in their societies, and to succumb to the economic blandishments of cheap goods being offered from low-wage states. They rushed into neo- or pseudo-post-industrial status, believing themselves to be too advanced for the populace to endure the ignominy of toil. Often, the result was that they reverted from their structural

sophistication as societies either to purely agricultural status, or to the status of resource economies. Australia is a classic example.

There was, at its core, no difference, in 2012, between the structural architecture of Australia and that of Nigeria. Both merely dig the wealth within their soil, and sell it to some other state to transform into energy or manufactures. And, at the end of the day, both states are vulnerable to the vagaries of the marketplace and to the vulnerability which results from having abandoned or neglected a balance of their economies between food production, raw materials and energy, manufactures, and service sectors.

With all of this, and particularly as societies change, we forget — or take for granted — our core identities. That loss of understanding of our core identity is where, and when, real change occurs. All societies which *feel* an existential threat — often an identity crisis — reach out, lash out, in search of familiar horizons. This is how terrorism and chaos are spawned.

VI

The Age of Terrorism Ends, Yet Terror Lives!

MILLIONS OF OUR HUMAN COMPANIONS succumb each day to the weariness of age or the ravages of illness. Yet we feel no terror at this. Nature is at work. Each day, thousands die from automobile crashes, gunshots, industrial accidents, earthquakes, and floods. Yet we feel no terror. A bomb explodes with savage unexpectedness in a city street with which we are familiar, killing one or two, or even a few unfortunates. And terror gnaws into our entrails. But rarely do we pause to ponder the incongruously disproportionate nature of our response. Both responses, however, are explicable.

What matters is how we discipline ourselves to respond to these stimuli.

What we see today as terrorism is very much an expression of the fear and frustration of traditional societies, the existence of which has been threatened by the competition from modern — essentially urban — societies. The seemingly implacable juggernaut of the modern, urban societies threatens the viability, the identity, and ultimately the very genetic existence and line of traditional societies.¹²

12 I stressed this theme at a UNESCO conference on June 10-11, 2004, at Lake Issyk-Kul, in the Kyrgyz Republic, in a speech entitled “At War With Ourselves: The Imperative Constant of National Cohesion Versus the Inevitable Dynamic of Global Cultural Interaction”. The introduction stressed that there was not a “clash of civilizations” underway in the world, at least not in the simplistic terms then being discussed, but there *was* a clash between identity and capability. What was

The cities, with all the electoral and military power in their hands so that they can act as the sole voice of the nation-state, will, over the coming decades, essentially repress — or wage war on — other societies, other nation-states, and other segments of their own society. The cities will continue to hide behind the legal authority still remnant in the nation-states — that authority granted to them as representatives of the “democratic” electoral majority — in order to maneuver in terms of trade and competition. Increasingly, the countryside will be merely the tool of the city, as it was in Hellenistic times. But in reaction, real warfare will begin to be waged by rural societies against and within the cities, as is already being evidenced with terrorism and the new, high-tech forms of guerilla and insurgent warfare and sabotage. And as with Rome, the object of the warfare against cities will not necessarily be to seize their power, but to destroy the symbolic rivalry they represent.

Terrorism, then, mostly emerges as a desperate act of a threatened and fearful society (although often staged with great bravado), usually a traditional or rural society. But terrorism is successful only when it is taken up and sponsored by a third party as a tool of psychological warfare. It uses surprise, vulnerability, and the randomness of its demonstrations — because terrorist incidents are merely demonstrations — to achieve objectives in a wider target audience. That is not how the individual terrorist sees his actions. He (or she) does indeed see the terrorist act as a

emerging was that “an aspect of all of humanity is at war with another aspect of all humanity”. The paper continued: “It is a fundamental reality that if peoples lose their sense of identity and historic points of reference — like a sailor at sea losing sight of the horizon — then they lose much of their ability to act collectively for their own survival. Disorientation, and even the threat of identity loss as the precursor to disorientation, leads to panic and chaos. The challenge, then, is not how human society should halt or reverse the progress and tools of advancement we have created, but, rather, how these tools can be made to fit with the human requirement for group identity, and how societies can strengthen their underlying sense of identity and purpose so that they do not feel the need to lash out in order to protect their survival.”

desperate blow for justice, but almost always the individual terrorist is just a pawn. His sacrifice is meaningless and flailing unless magnified by media and the compliance of the target audience.

Let us also agree that fear and negative uncertainty generate pessimism, not just in individuals, but as a mass neurosis in society. Just as victory and defeat are, as the strategist Possony said, induced in the mind, so, too, are fear and pessimism psychological conditions. They create, along with a prevailing sense of negative uncertainty, outcomes which have physical manifestations: paralysis and indecisiveness; a distorted sense of priorities; and so on. [We must also be aware that paralysis in national decisionmaking does not prevent change from occurring. As with rust and decay, change occurs inexorably. The key is to ensure that change is managed. It cannot be managed if decisionmaking is distracted, inoperable, or reactive.]

Thus can nations be led along paths away from their interests.

Few terrorists are aware of the comprehensive impact of their actions. As individuals, they act out of a desperation borne of the failure of their society, or their group within society. Those who manipulate acts of terrorism, and particularly those emotionally-uninvested, but strategically invested, third parties — usually governments — which sponsor the individual terrorists or groups and provide the logistic path to their operational success, do plan for specific outcomes. Even then, however, few terrorism planners actually understand the phenomenon they unleash.

The first decade of the 21st Century was unique in history in that it saw almost an entire world shaped by the fact that the victim societies — almost every society in the “industrialized” world — agreed, in part, to “rules” imposed by the terrorists. The principal rule is that the target society

must agree to be terrified, and to respond in ways which the terrorist demands. By reacting strategically to acts of terror, the target society is thereby weakened, and the terrorist and his claims are raised in stature from their actual enfeebled, desperate status to equal the strength and majesty of his target, that target which the terrorist, we should recall, lacks the capacity to attack openly, conventionally, and equally.

This, then, is the core objective of a weaker individual or movement when fighting against an overwhelmingly superior opponent. This is asymmetric warfare, which forces the wealthier opponent to fight on terms and on terrain dictated by the weaker.

We have now witnessed the end of “The Age of Terrorism”; this ludicrous period of mass hypnosis. We have not witnessed the end of terrorism, but merely of a brief age in which politics and conflict were *defined* by the phenomenon. And the end of “the age of terrorism” was not merely signified by the fact that a significant terrorist, Osama bin Laden, was reported to have been killed in May 2011. It goes far more deeply than that.

Terrorism is a symptom of a dying or disease-ravaged society, or a segment of society. It gasps what little oxygen it can from any reaction it can engender from its victim societies; the target on which hopes of relief or survival or deathbed vengeance are pinned, often mistakenly. It articulates its limbs solely — where it has any sustaining life — on the fuel provided to it by third-party states or movements which themselves lack the scale to challenge the target society.

So terrorism is a tactic of desperation. Without the life given to it by the willing participation of the victim, it withers and dies: an unheard cry. Absent a response by the target audience, as well, the terrorist is of no value to any third-state sponsor. What the United States of America did, fol-

lowing the attacks of the various Islamist terrorists, and particularly Osama bin Laden's *al-Qaida* attacks on the US of September 11, 2001, was to *absolutely acquiesce to the terrorists*. It allowed itself to acquiesce to the fervent wish of the terrorist for his target to acknowledge the act and to be terrorized. And terror — a psychological response — engenders either paralysis or distorted decisionmaking.

The US responded with such fervor to the unignorable acts of 9/11 that bin Laden, *al-Qaida*, and its sympathizers could at last breathe again. They had recognition; they had legitimacy; they had identity: they had life.

Ironically, the cry of the bin Ladenists was not against the West. It was in reality a cry against their own individual societies. It was the absolute expression of a frustration which feared for the identity and life of their own societies. The massive Western response to the Islamist wave of terror distorted politics and security around the world. It is possible that the legitimacy which this gave to the terrorists had the later effect of stirring hope in a number of states — from Iran and parts of rural Pakistan and Central Asia, to Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya — where frustrations were given energy across broader swathes of society.

But the West, in large part, has tired of the phenomenon, and still fails to understand it. It is bored. Loss of life on its own does not engender a response from it. Hundreds of deaths from flooding in the US South during May 2011 inspired humanitarian concern amongst Americans, not fear and paralysis. The deaths of some 40,000 souls a year from road accidents in the US similarly raises few concerns. Little wonder that in the last few months of his life, Osama bin Laden was dreaming of new theatrical terrorism which would re-ignite his enemies to action.

Western publics *would* have responded to a very large terrorist “spectacular”, particularly if it involved a nuclear

weapon. *Al-Qaida* acquired several small nuclear weapons in 1996, abandoning (or failing in) one attempt to detonate a device in New York. But Western publics have acquired more distractions and greater concerns than terrorism over the past decade. They want, because of economic and other issues which have played upon their sense of invincibility, outrage, and fear, to “declare victory in the war on terror”.

With the indifference of the public and media, terrorism could not endure as a major strategic weapon. In the case of Middle Eastern states now undergoing cathartic political upheaval, the frustrations have already begun to turn to the real source of their concerns: their own societies.

I wrote, in 2002¹³: “Like air power, terrorism is a superb strategic weapon which is incomplete by itself. Where the overwhelming and successful use of air power as a strategic weapon still requires the insertion of ground forces to occupy territory and complete the process of Victory, so too strategic-level terrorism *still requires the essential complementary action or reaction of the victim to complete the process*. Terrorism is a psychological weapon and can only be defeated by psychology, even though terrorism and counter-terrorism utilize physical imagery ... to achieve their goals of psychological domination. We cannot properly counter terrorism if we fail to understand what it is. ... It requires and often needs to create a receptive psychological climate to be successful. Therefore, counter-terrorism implies the necessity for a defensive conditioning as well as offensive operations.”

Dr Stefan Possony, the great philosopher, said in 1973: “Terrorism is as old as war, of which it is a technique, and for which it may be used as a substitute. ... [It] is as complex a phenomenon as any combination of war, revolution, criminality, psychological disturbance, ideological fanati-

13 Copley, Gregory R.: “Psychological Strategy in the War on Terrorism”, in *Defense & Foreign Affairs Daily*, October 25, 2002.

cism, and mental disease could be.”¹⁴

For US society, then, the entire purpose of the “war on terror” has been forgotten. It was a war which should not have been taken up, because it gave life to Islamist terrorism in the West, as well as to radical Islamism and *jihadism* in the Muslim world. Americans ask, then, what should their reaction have been to the 9/11 attacks if not to declare war. Declare war on whom? Declare war on a concept? Absent a clear enemy, better to find a response which would not have punished the entire Western world. If the enemy had been identified — as bin Laden and *al-Qaida* — then best to work in the same shadows which the terrorists themselves occupied, much as the Israeli Government did to track down and address the terrorists of the Munich Olympics in 1972.

Better still to understand and address the underpinnings of social distress which cause terrorism — that ultimate expression of frustration — to emerge. As always, planned action is strategically more viable than emotional reaction.

Those “underpinnings of social distress” invariably become apparent in times of great change, when the security of a way of life is threatened. Such change raises questions about personal identity, and whether we — and our way of life — are relevant, and whether we, as a society, can survive. This invariably becomes a call to arms, or a willingness to placate a new master.

The change, and consequent fear, highlights the disenfranchisement of individuals or societies from their roots, their soil. Urbanization creates this schism between traditional and “modern” society. We may even see that the “war of *terroir*” actually creates terror and terrorism, as we see people clinging to their traditions — the *terroir* links of soil and geography to diet, culture, and beliefs, and therefore

14 Possony, Stefan T.: “Terrorism: A Global Concern”, in *Defense & Foreign Affairs*, January 1973.

identity — as their world crumbles.

The world changes continually, so change will always disenfranchise some, and empower and enrich others. Terrorism and fear, then, will always be a response to tectonic change in society. How, when, and at what level, we deal with them is what counts.

As we discuss in the next chapter, fear is not always easy to explain, or grasp, or, indeed, to address. Often it is the ill-defined cause which produces very *clearly*-defined outcomes. We live now in an abstractly-defined world. It is no longer a matter of merely food, water, shelter. As a result, our fears are often, now, abstractly-based, and require some introspection to put into perspective. We need to start *that* process.

VII

Fear and Uncertainty Have Paths of Their Own

FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY CREATE PATTERNS, paths of their own. And societies embroiled in the current population chaos are in a mosaic of uncertainty — and resultant fear — over the fate and durability of the social and security frameworks once taken for granted. Mass reaction to these fears triggers transformative change. This has been the pattern of human nature historically. But there are always opportunities to *seize and command* change.

In our current era, almost all societies in the world have gone beyond the stage where they expect stability and linear progressions of the past to long endure. Some societies — almost *en bloc* — anticipate the end of their present levels and forms of security; others anticipate an end to their suffering. Few expect insulation from change. That change, however, need not be entirely inscrutable if we look at global patterns and at historical human behavior.

What we now call “economics” determines power and conflict patterns because wealth, or the deprivation of it, determines survival, and, for those who survive, “economics” determines the relative control they may have over individual and societal destiny. Thus social behavior determines economic viability, and the failure or success of eco-

conomic patterns determines social corrective or compounding action.

We are about to see an acceleration of social reaction to economic failure; a reaction to the inflexibility of policies which have failed to adjust to changing circumstances. Indeed, we are witnessing the reality that governance policies tend toward more pervasive and rigid control — over-control, expressed in terms of regulation — at exactly the time when, to avoid collapse, societies should exhibit flexibility.

Many finance ministers were, in the global economic crisis in 2012, speaking, still, as though their national economies could perform well with just minor adjustment to old patterns. This was almost certainly not to be so, particularly in the West, where the rapid growth in state revenues since the end of the Cold War pushed governments down the path of highly capital-intensive programs in areas which absolutely do not contribute to national productivity in essential manufactures or primary industry, and in many cases actually constrain productivity rises. As wealth grew, and tax revenues rose commensurately, the logical approaches of governments in market economies *should* have been to reduce taxation and further stimulate investment.

This occurred only rarely and incompletely. Taxpayers, also benefiting from rising wealth, themselves did not demand that governments constrain their spending. The situation thus created massive state sector positions in the Western economies. When recession strikes, industry and private citizens scale back and pay the price, but governments are less flexible. Unions and state workers make themselves immune to cuts and to the realities of the “real world”. In countries such as Greece, France, Spain, Portugal, and so on (and now the US, UK, Australia, etc.), those in the private sector who have come to rely on state handouts — and therefore become “agents” for statism, and by

default are opposed to market freedom — compound the entrenched political class' view that the state should not undergo the kind of profound self-analysis and restructuring which the private sector must embrace.

The US, Australia, Greece, and so on, as just a few examples, were, in the early 21st Century, undergoing *per capita* productivity declines just at the time when they need to be developing a strategic buffer of internally-balanced economies and the ability to better compete internationally. And there is a fear that if wasteful government spending on huge capital projects ceases, then economies will collapse. This fearful, selfish, and ignorant intellectual process within governments has been caused by the hubris generated by unfettered control of great wealth, and the presses which print the money. But governments only have the ability, in real terms, to dominate the non-productive — or, at best, productivity-enabling infrastructure — spending. Only by returning spending power to the innovative sections of society (in other words, the people) can economies become nimble and productive.

This is unlikely to happen, so we should expect sudden contractions in buying power in many Western states over the coming few years.

We began, by 2010 and 2011, to see the savage contraction of some aspects of multinational mechanisms to amass and deploy capital where-ever the market determines it can profitably be invested. Part of this contraction derives from the situation in which the world is entering a period where it may soon be without a viable global reserve currency. This in turn leads to the point where trade becomes more bilateral; investment scope becomes limited in some respects; and nationalism — and with it, protectionism — revives out of economic necessity.

There have been many factors leading to the revival of

nationalism since the collapse of the brief (45 year) bipolar global strategic framework in 1990-91, and these were touched upon (certainly by this writer) from 1990 onward. So the seeming uncertainty in which we now find ourselves did not emerge suddenly or without understandable cause.

Perhaps, then, our “uncertainty” is not so uncertain?

Strategic Patterns: What clarity is emerging?

1. Western economies would, from 2012, continue to decline, in real and strategic terms (if not necessarily in nominal accounting terms), unless truly radical restructuring was to occur, including the rapid and massive reduction of the size of government intervention in economies. Governments, since the end of the Cold War, began growing in size far more rapidly than their economies. Thus, the end of effective distribution and value of money (eg: through hyper-inflation), will mean an end to the era of entitlement welfare, even though politicians, to survive, will attempt to disguise this through the distribution of bread and circuses of increasingly declining value. Those less-developed states which have adopted modern/Western city and governmental structures, and have successfully run pseudo-democratic governance models were, by 2012, also facing the same challenges as the the wealthier Western states. States such as Egypt and Iran, which have, in fact, developed into command economies, run by city-dominated governments, were facing economic ruin, largely because they lacked the luxury — which the great powers have always had — of an overwhelmingly efficient rural sector.

The bankruptcy of states such as Egypt, Greece, and others, could have profound strategic consequences, given the potential for political implosion. In the case of Egypt, specifically, instability would jeopardize maritime traffic through the Suez Canal and Red Sea, with

dire consequences for global trade. The Egyptian example is apposite, because the economic impact of its 2011-12 political upheaval made it clear that the Government should waste no time in re-shaping society to make it less dependent on Cairo. Yet Cairo remained far too appealing for Egyptians to consider returning to the farms, and by the June 2012 Presidential elections, an urban Islamism had taken hold. [We have to see that modern Islamism — political Islam — is itself an urban phenomenon, which often spawns an urban *jihadism*. This often links to a more fundamental, and less sophisticated, rural *jihadism*, but sociologists have yet to examine the divergence of rural and urban *jihadist* phenomena.] Similar conditions to those which became evident in 2011-12 in Egypt also prevailed at the same time in, for example, Nigeria, the source of almost a quarter of US energy imports.

However,

2. No “democratically-elected” government could dare face voters if it reduced “bread for the masses”, that method of cheaply buying votes. So most governments would continue to jeopardize their nations — by continuing the bribery of the electorate, even with money which devalues by the day — in order to remain in office. Change, then, should only be expected through the appearance of massive threat, or national collapse, enabling the emergence of decisive leadership which is *not* based on the popular vote.
3. Those states which abandon forms of taxation which curb productivity (such as those of the 21st Century, based on the taxation of carbon emissions, or those which tax diesel fuel, most used by industry) will fare better than those which do not. That is to state the case in its negative form. In positive terms, those governments

which cut non-productive acts — acts which stop the spontaneous and essentially socially cost-free process of innovation and creation — and instead stimulate the desire and security to invest and profit, and the curiosity to explore and innovate, will prosper most.

Where societies overcome their decline and impending collapse in the near-term, then, they will come to be commanded not by electoral “democracies”, but by decisive non-populist leaders who truly return productivity to the marketplace. Russia and the People’s Republic of China were thus favored because their leaders were already prepared to take unpopular steps to ensure cohesion and discipline in their societies. This is, of course, a short-term remedy or containment at the expense of freedoms. And freedom is essential, as we know, for innovation to flourish to enable long-term progress in human tool-building. Again, we define “human tool-building” as the accretion of physical and intellectual capabilities to adapt to the needs and progress of society.

In all of this, cities have emerged as the battleships of population strategy and politics: great ships of state, armored with the trappings of wealth and authority. It is not surprising that cities proved to be the decisive structures in the growth of power and civilization in ancient Hellenic times, and it is unsurprising now, for some of the same and for some different reasons, that cities are the decisive elements of the early 21st Century, unresponsive to anything but their own sense of destiny. However, even by 2012, we began to see signs that battleships prove difficult to maneuver, and that adherents of the city-battleships have failed to see that the time had come for more flexible thinking, and for a return to achieving a balance between urban and rural priorities.

So, as with the times of Hellas, dangers lurk, and the rise again of cities as nodes of great power presages merely the turning of human destiny, as before, toward a time when the immovable objects of human concentration discover their vulnerability to mobile masses. We are not yet again quite at that point, however, and for now the cities seem — as they did before Athens and Pella and the monuments of Ozymandias became rubble — invulnerable to the passage of time, other than to grow with it. And grow they do at an unprecedented rate and scale.

Cities — urban masses — are complex structures full of self-importance, prestige, ponderous processes and established hierarchies. Cities, significantly, create an ethos of their own, which often among their populations replace religious belief to lesser or greater degrees; they establish hierarchies and life-affecting priorities which are more vital to the day-to-day survival of their citizens than broader, national dependencies.

Cities are, for the most part, focused on consumption, and reprocessing of materials to add value to them, and on the function of command and management. These processes reinforce the abstraction of their societies from the more direct functions of rural, or non-urban, life which focus more on extracting the essence of human survival from nature.

It is little wonder that, when young adults move from rural homes to the big cities, parents worry whether their children can retain the values, faiths, and beliefs instilled in more simple, reflective, and less intensively populated areas. Cities have a way of supplanting traditional beliefs and reinforcing the power of the immediate grandeur. Urban society, in essence, creates its own belief system. Cities focus on visible — relatively short-term, but nonetheless complex — gratification, eschewing the patience of the more

evenly-patterned countryside. There, among the intense closeness of like-minded fellows, dwell the sophists and navel-gazers, convinced of their omnipotence.

Little wonder, too, that the great religions were often the product of visionaries in the harsh, solitary environment of deserts, where deep, longer-term philosophical thought and introspection was the only relief possible.

We have begun to lead up to the way in which urbanization transforms social and political thought. If we accept that a transformed lifestyle leads to a transformed pattern of logic — given that logic is the process pattern by which we determine and undertake what is necessary for our personal survival within the geographic/social set of circumstances in which we must function — then we are ready to address how this plays out in what I call “the new geopolitics of urban societies”.

VIII

The New Geopolitics of Urban Societies

*Let the river run;
Let all the dreamers
Wake the nation.
Come, the New Jerusalem.
Silver cities rise;
The morning lights
The streets that lead them;
And sirens call them on with a song.*

— *Let the River Run*, by Carly Simon

URBANIZATION — THE MASS MOVEMENT of populations into cities — has changed absolutely the way in which most states work. It has altered the relationship of people to geography, and this profoundly affects their physical, economic, and social/identity security. The new geopolitics of urban-dominated states renders parts of large countries — particularly large federal unions of smaller states, such as the US, Canada, Australia, Nigeria, and even the Russian Federation, the People's Republic of China, Brazil, India, and others — susceptible to the appeal of secession. Even the United Kingdom, within a decade or two of becoming a pseudo-federation, a move which broke the sense of unity of the state, is now facing secessionist calls.¹⁵

15 Following the Scottish National Party (SNP) majority win in elections for the Scottish Assembly on May 5, 2011, and Alex Salmond's re-election as Scotland's

It is entirely probable that the 21st Century will see the break-up of a number of major federal states if urban societies persist in functioning solely, or largely, in the interests of the large urban voting masses instead of the entire nation-state.

This process of urbanization — and its impact on policy-making and the urban view of the nation-state — has been underway globally since at least the late 18th Century, but it has now achieved critical mass. We can link the compounding growth and capability of urban civilization — as opposed to pre-civilizational cultures and classicism — to the rising numeracy of society. Numeracy and mathematics have been the primary tools of the extension of human capabilities, and this extension literally comes to embrace quantification and expansion in all areas of wealth, space (territory), and measurable possession and activity. The industrial revolutions and their successor “revolutions” have been the result of the human creation of mathematics, including the measurement (or quantification) of time itself.

Numeracy, mathematics, and quantification of all aspects of life and our tools have been the hallmark of the move into “modern civilization”, and this has now, for example, transcended the *cultural* bonds which once linked “the West”. We are more linked, as societies, by numbers than by art and social values.

And if we consider that most of the important conflicts of the late 19th and 20th centuries had their origins because of the transformed nature of national policymaking in favor of urban, “numerical” viewpoints, then we can only assume still greater conflicts or shifts of power may occur in

First Minister, Mr Salmond announced his party’s intention to introduce a Scottish independence referendum in the next five years. Mr Salmond told cheering supporters in Aberdeen on May 7, 2011: “... in this term of the Parliament, we shall bring forward a referendum and trust the people with Scotland’s own constitutional future.” The Scottish Nationals also resoundingly won local council elections in Scotland on May 3, 2012.

the 21st. The US Civil War (1860-65) was primarily a conflict between urban measurable values and rural cultures, but resulted in the creation of a more balanced (agricultural, industrial, urban) national culture for the United States, which enabled the US to dominate the 20th Century. The Chinese overthrow of the Qing monarchy (1912) and the start of a long series of civil wars up to and including the Cultural Revolution (1966-76); the Russian Revolution of 1917; and the revolutions in Iran (1979), Egypt (1952), Indonesia (1950), and so on: all were differing products of the schisms between urban intellectualism and traditional Westphalian (and earlier) approaches to governance.

In the current wave of cultural realignments, confederacies such as the European Union may enjoy a breathing space if they resist the urge toward unified policy and centralized power, but the EU seems bent on having all the powers of an Empire, with none of the responsibilities. Ultimately, a further battle between urban and non-urban societies may be played out in Europe.

It is the alchemic mix of geography and human society which creates geopolitics. However, unlike the art of alchemy which strives solely (and fails) to produce gold from base metals, the outcomes of the mix of specific territories with human groupings are different on each occasion. Geography is the (relative) constant — given that it also has a long-term relationship with climate — and the inconstant is the eternally ebbing and flowing life and movement of humans.

The great flow of people from rural areas into cities over the past half-century has now re-defined the definitions of statehood with which we have lived since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. It was that series of treaties in 1648 which began to codify how we defined what we call the “modern nation-state”, embodying territory, citizens, hier-

archies, laws, languages, and customs. The 1648 model was always under progressive modification, and in 1945 the Westphalian model was essentially frozen in form by the creation and concepts of the United Nations, supposedly for all time.

As I mentioned earlier, the overwhelming majority of nation-states which existed even 300 years ago do not exist today, and few people today could name even 10 percent of the sovereign states which existed at the time of the Peace of Westphalia. Indeed, our entire concept of the permanency of the modern nation-state is delusional. What is a nation-state, other than a piece of land and water which has been claimed by a group of people? The geography remains mute witness to the passing of time. The people come and go, and the nation — and sometimes the nation-state — is sustained only as long as the fire of their achievements and thought remains alive through monument or inscribed word.

But from 1648 until, say, 2000, a period of three-and-a-half centuries, the model which defined sovereign nation-statehood was essentially one which embraced a balance of capacities within the entity: its ability to defend its existence; its ability to provide for itself in terms of food, water, and manufactures; and a cohesiveness of language and culture (or at least the allegiance of member cultures to a common national identity). That model of the nation-state has now been abandoned, but the new model — the city-controlled state which procures (outsources) many of its needs from other states — has not yet proven that it can survive a major confrontation. Indeed, logic says that such a state cannot be the master of its own destiny, and is therefore, in the ultimate test, not sovereign.

Thus, the “new urban state” — the 21st Century version, not the 19th and 20th century versions — can survive and

prosper only when there is no major conflict, or existential challenge, but cannot survive in command of its own fate under duress. It is like the man who jumps without a parachute from an aircraft at altitude. All goes well until the final intervention of the earth.

Spengler began to get the measure of the phenomenon in the early 20th Century. He defined “Culture and Civilization — the [first being the] living body of a soul and [the second] the mummy of it,” essentially differentiating between the age of culture and modern, urban-dominated life (civilization).

“For the Western existence the distinction [between its cultural and civilizational periods] lies at about the year 1800 — on the one side of that frontier life in fullness and sureness of itself, formed by growth from within, in one great uninterrupted evolution from Gothic childhood to Goethe and Napoleon, and on the other the autumnal, artificial, rootless life of our great cities, under forms fashioned by intellect. Culture-man lives inwards, Civilization-man outwards in space and amongst bodies and ‘facts’. That which the one feels as Destiny the other understands as a linkage of causes and effects, and thenceforward he is a materialist — in the sense of the word valid for, and only valid for, Civilization — whether he wills it or no, and whether Buddhist, Stoic or Socialist doctrines wear the garb of religion or not.”

By the end of the first decade of the 21st Century, and for the first time in human history, more people lived in urban areas than in rural areas. “City-dwellers” had assumed massive numerical dominance over food producers, a factor which becomes truly critical when the modern approach to quantitative “democracy” is introduced. This has been a slow process, which began at least 13,000 years ago when structured agriculture began to appear in what is now

termed the Middle East. Urbanization — the gathering of people into non-agricultural concentrations — gradually evolved from this new ability to create the food surpluses which could not be guaranteed by the earlier methods of hunting and gathering of edibles.

Plainly put: the efficiency of agriculture made — and makes — urbanization possible. The efficiency of the remote (ie: non-urban) extraction from the earth of minerals and energy resources makes *modern* urbanization feasible. Cities have achieved wealth on the efficiency of farmers and miners (including oil and gas workers), and the cities have then used “democracy” to suppress recognition of the contribution of those farmers and resource extractors. But as rural populations become disenchanted with the loneliness and relative frugality of their surroundings, they drift to the cities. “How ya gonna keep ’em down on the farm, after they seen Paree?”, the old song goes. This urban drift can be satisfied as long as agricultural efficiency continues to improve — as has been evidenced by farmers in North America, Europe, and Australasia — but at some point, the food supplies stop or become inadequate to meet the needs of the cities. Or, with economic collapse in the cities, the farmers cannot be paid.

That is when wars of, essentially, secession erupt between rural and urban peoples, and even between different urban peoples within a state.

So it is evident that such a dramatic transformation of the priorities and concentrations of the nation-state, as has occurred over the centuries of increasing urbanization, cannot fail to alter the approach which urbanized electorates have toward territory. That, by definition, transforms geopolitics.

As we just noted, the process of urbanization has also seen — particularly in the first decade of the 21st Century

and the decade before — governments grow more rapidly than the economies which sustain them. Under such circumstances, the government soon becomes the master of the state rather than its servant.

There are states which continue to consciously view geopolitics from the classical model, and attempt to ensure that they view sovereignty from the view that it must be sustained by control of the territory and means to produce food surpluses; the resources and workforce to add value to agricultural and mineral produce; and the social structures to create an efficient and flexible entity capable of securing the safety of its population and structures. But in today's world, classical geopolitical thinking is directly challenged by the modern, Western dogma of "democracy".

This Western approach to democracy is one which ascribes an absolute power to regularly and formally scheduled elections in which the voting mandate is extended uniformly to as many of the population as possible. And then, a majority of votes cast determines that almost unfettered power is given to a small group of leaders who are essentially able to make the critical decisions of a society until the next elections are held. [The enfranchisement of women was directly a result of urbanization, which is why, unsurprisingly, Australia — for the past 200 years the most urbanized society in the world — was first to give women the right to stand for election as well as to vote (New Zealand was the first to allow women the right to vote). Rural women have always been empowered, but in different ways to urban women. But the process of electorally enfranchising women in Western/modern urban-dominated societies has dramatically transformed policymaking, and entrenched its urban intellectual orientation.]

The Western system worked fairly well during much of the 20th Century and into the first part of the 21st, the only

brief period during which democracy — as we think of it today — has been widely practiced. But it worked because populations were widely dispersed, in most countries, over the broad reaches of their geography. And during that century, too, we saw countries striving to achieve greatness in all sectors of their society: from their agriculture, to their industry, and to the flowering of their intellectual and economic achievements.

In many respects, the new urban states, or urban-dominated states, see greatness solely in intellectual and financial terms. This has been the great appeal of the visions of comfort and social cohesion which cities promote to those who have labored lonely in the fields, and in the mines and forges where dirt, sweat, and shortened lives were the only certainties. Gamal Abdel Nasser, when he came to the Presidency in Egypt in 1956, told his (and my) friend, the writer and intelligence officer, Miles Copeland, that he could not afford to modernize all of Egypt at once, and that therefore he would start by modernizing its capital, Cairo.

With this naïve act, Nasser precipitated a flow of Egyptians from the rural and desert regions into Cairo, creating an urban mass which could not, ultimately, be adequately contained. Egypt's rural citizens wanted for themselves the benefits of the great city which Nasser was creating, and the more that the Egyptian Government attempted to provide the infrastructure to meet the flood of internal migration, the more it generated the economic and lifestyle appeal which made the city the focus of yet further immigration.

A half-century later, cities have, for the same reasons, become the bright, burning light which attracts the remnant populations of rural areas. In this, most modern societies have been able to withstand the migration because of constant improvements in the productivity of their agricultural sectors. This, indeed, was the impetus for the original

and gradual formation of fixed settlements: the increasing efficiency of rural food production which enabled surplus labor — freed from the demands of hunting, gathering, or sowing and reaping — to migrate to cities for industrial employment.

Today — as we have already noted — the United States is able to produce food surpluses with an allocation of less than one percent of its GDP and a minute portion of its population devoted to agriculture. But herein lies much of the reason why the decisionmaking processes of modern, urbanized democracies have been distorted. Given that each eligible adult person can vote, and therefore can help determine the leadership and policies of the state, it is clear that there are fewer and fewer people who vote for leaders and policies which protect the interests — and understand the value — of rural society and agricultural production. Equally, as cities have evolved, and modern societies have out-sourced much of their industrial manufacturing, fewer and fewer voters understand or work in the manufacturing sector. Gradually, as we have seen, more people vote on the basis of their increasingly constrained perspective.

They increasingly vote for what are, essentially, intellectual concepts which appeal to an innate — but untested — sense of human justice. And that includes voting for those who promise to deliver the most “rights” and “entitlements”. Essentially, then, they vote for irresponsibility, because they vote for maximum unaccountability of source funds (the origins of which they do not consider soundly). They also vote for maximum *perceived* security of their own economic condition. The theme, then, is “give me what I want and don’t bother me with how you do it”. This, clearly, is linearist short-termism. They seek employment, yes, but only if it offers great reward for least effort. The demagoguery, then, required of a politician seeking office is

to speak in terms of the highest moral duty, and to deliver the maximum bribe for each vote, with the clear understanding that “*feeling* moral” has, in urban societies, replaced the value of traditional society of “*being* moral”.

There are still some major societies which think in classical geopolitical terms, and which attempt to seek dominance in all the vital areas of sovereignty. The Russian Federation, the People’s Republic of China, Turkey, Iran — and others — think in such terms. And they are able to do so by virtue of the degree to which each constrains the real authority given to their electorates. It is true that, since 1991, each of those four states mentioned has broadened its approach to governance along Western approaches to “democracy”, and this has both enabled these states to give impetus to their economic growth and entrepreneurship, and also caused problems which challenge the viability of their states.

By increasing productivity and economic wealth through loosening the constraints on their societies — in other words, by making their societies in some ways more free — these states have themselves set in motion the flow of internal migration from the countrysides to the cities. And their own political dynamics are thus changing, just as they have already changed profoundly in Western advanced states.

A landmark 2008 study for the US Defense Department’s Director of Net Assessment, by Laurent Murawiec of The Hudson Institute, opened with the prophetic remarks¹⁶: “Russia is depopulating, Siberia is emptying out. A gigantic imbalance is being created in the heartland of Eurasia, the heartland of which is increasingly empty of men, especially of Russians. The opening of a vacuum of that size, and the concomitant demographic disequilibrium with populous

16 Murawiec, Laurent: *The Great Siberian War of 2030*. A Report to the Office of Net Assessment, US Department of Defense, January 2008.

neighbors must have geopolitical effects of the first order. The disparity between a rising economic power and a stagnant one will only sharpen differences between China and Russia.”

Kam Wing Chan, of the University of Washington, in the US, noted in a May 5, 2011, paper to be published in a forthcoming book, *The Encyclopedia of Global Migration*: “Rural-urban migration has ... played a very important part in China’s recent epic urbanization. In the 30 years since 1979, China’s urban population has grown by about 440-million to 622-million in 2009. Of the 440-million increase, about 340-million was attributable to net migration and urban reclassification. Even if only half of that increase was migration, the volume of rural-urban migration in such a short period is likely the largest in human history.”¹⁷

In the cases of Turkey and Iran, internal migration from rural areas to the cities during the last decades of the 20th Century and the first decade of the 21st imported an entirely new mindset into urban voting populations. These internal migrants mostly brought with them to the cities a less educated mindset and a more traditional view of the rôle of religion in daily life. This — in both countries — substantially bolstered the Islamist governments depending on their votes. Indeed, it is probable that the respective political parties and candidates specifically stressed their Islamist approach to governance in order to appeal to these voters. Even in these two states, with their strong historical patterns of channeling the process of representative governance, the ability of populist and simplistic appeals of leaders is critical to shaping street support. And in all societies in which populism and broadly-enfranchised “democracy” is a key factor, policies will be championed by politicians

17 Kam Wing Chan: “China, Internal Migration”, in the forthcoming (as at May 2011) Immanuel Ness and Peter Bellwood (eds.) *The Encyclopedia of Global Migration*, Blackwell Publishing.

who appeal to the street, to the voting mass, regardless of their positive or negative influence on the needs of the state as a whole.

And in particular, when the mass of voters or street support is in the great urban areas, then policies will be chosen to win those audiences, and the interests of the countryside, and the balanced nation-state will be disregarded. Short-term electoral greed will always triumph over long-term societal needs. As all “democratic” politicians note: “To do good, I must be re-elected; to be re-elected, I must promise that which will get me re-elected.”

I use the word “democracy” carefully in all of this, because the *current and populist view* of democracy in Western societies means solely the expression of popular will through regularly scheduled elections — snapshots — which determine to whom a voter wishes to assign his or her individual responsibilities, but only with very limited options as to representatives and philosophies. Surely, in a true democracy, there is implicit in our daily actions an expression of this assignment of the power of the individual to another (an elected official, a leader, or a sovereign). Or are we only “democratic” as citizens with a vote along narrowly-defined lines once each few years? Arguably, monarchs were in many instances through history more accountable to their citizens and subjects than are modern — and to all practicable purposes, unimpeachable — presidents. Monarchs had to gauge the desires of their people each day, and be in tune with them, or face dire consequences. Elected officials today get away with far greater crimes than most monarchs could have considered, because the mechanisms to remove them remain weak, and the punishments token.

In 2009, as urbanization was becoming overwhelming, I began to look at its impact on Britain and Australia. I wrote

a piece entitled “The Geographic Component of Governance”¹⁸, which — here updated to take account of events which have played out since — noted:

It is time to revisit the concept of governance with the recognition that geography and other factors have, in our quest for “democracy”, been relegated to a position of diminished importance, to our great detriment.

Governance is considered to be the allocation of human resources to the management of human society, embracing the capture and command of non-human assets and factors to be used to the benefit of human society. All governance is considered, as well, to reflect *a balance of constantly traded rights and duties* of those human individuals who govern and those who are governed, allocated or assigned in varying proportions for various aspects of human life.

Governance, however, would be more realistically defined or approached if it adequately embraced a recognition not only of each individual human, but of each corner of geographic landscape, and each creature and organism. This is not to assign “rights” to soil, rock, plant, or beast, but to ensure that human action and survival is considered in balance and context.

In short, we have increasingly and inexorably through history moved our considerations of governance away from contextual approaches to those approaches which focus overwhelmingly on the primacy of man *outside*, or apart from, mankind’s relationship with geography and other aspects of life. Even “animal rights” activists have not seen their passion within the

18 See, Copley, Gregory R.: “The Geographic Component of Governance”, in *Defense & Foreign Affairs Special Analysis*, April 24, 2009, and *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 4-2009. Washington, DC: the International Strategic Studies Association.

vital symbiosis of man, geography, and nature; they consider non-human lives *apart* from their relationship with humanity.

Much of our present removal of governance considerations from geography and non-human organisms has evolved because of the success of the evolution of social management into, and beyond, the Westphalian system. This provided a context by which human societies formed into cultural groupings — nations — within defined geographic boundaries: becoming “nation-states”. We have, however, come to take the geographic aspect of the sovereign “nation-state” for granted, even though the massive upheavals of cratocide, cratogenesis, and cratometamorphosis have been — particularly in the 20th Century — reconfiguring human life and its association with geography for some time. Certainly, we still regard the “sanctity of borders” as significant, but the evolution of human behavior has gradually transformed the critical or containing nature of geographic boundaries as they were once conceived, or even codified, with the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648.

All of this is leading to a point which is critical to the management of states as we enter an age of major global upheaval.

Human society has, as it has urbanized (and dramatically so in the post-Cold War period, by 2008, when it became more than half-urbanized), moved unconsciously (for the most part) into what social scientists such as the great, late Dr Herman Kahn warned of as “neo-post-industrial” status.¹⁹ This transition

19 US sociologist Daniel Bell, who was born in 1919, coined the phrase “post-industrial society”, although his definition, unlike Kahn’s, was essentially utopian and therefore desirable. Kahn actually referred to “neo-post-industrial society” as societies which spent and lived as though they had *no need* to maintain an industrial

saw most people begin to function without regard or consideration for maintaining a balance with geography and non-human forms of life (including agriculture), and with less need to consider intimate human cooperation.

All of this, as I said, is leading to a point.

Post-industrial status was considered by its initial followers to be a point of nirvana for humanity. It was to be the point at which human society could function at leisure, or engage in artistic or intellectual pursuits for their own sake, without devoting the lives of its citizens to labor. It was, of course, in reality, essentially unrealistic, utopian, and unsustainable. “Neo-post-industrial” at least implied that urbanization could be sustained as a result of massive efficiencies by small population groups (including rural societies), producing food and industrial output needed to sustain urban populations which were essentially “non-productive” in most of the critical elements of life: food and water.

As human society became more complex (long before the intellectual conception of “post-industrialism”), governance mechanisms had evolved to address sectoral needs and pressures. The British House of Lords evolved, for example, essentially, to safeguard the great rural seats of wealth — agricultural production — which provided the employment, accommodation, and sustenance of the British people. As urban and industrial life prospered, Britain’s House of Commons assumed a growing importance, and between them they tempered the balance of the protection of the rural (and geographically more broad) attributes of the State with the urban.

or productive component to their economies. To Kahn, this was a danger sign.

This bicameral balancing of essentially (and increasingly) competing aspects of consensual governance evolved so that, for example, in many nation-states and sub-states, an “upper chamber”, or Senate, came to represent the rights of the territorial components of a nation-state, while the “lower chamber” represented the interests of the individual citizens. The House of Lords (originally representing the rural countryside, or, essentially *the geographic areas*, of Britain), the Senate (representing the geographic states of the US, Canada, Australia, Nigeria, etc.), and so on, provided “context”, so that legislation and governance could be balanced.

That process began to come to a rapid end in the post-Cold War era in the West because urban electorates dominated. Something moving closer to “post-industrial” society had succeeded to the point where agricultural output in major Western economies was so efficient in manpower terms that rural electoral votes were reduced in terms of democratic political power. Industrial output, to a large extent, was also “outsourced” to less wealthy societies.

This writer postulated in the 1980s, for example, that India was approaching this watershed, as it moved from being a net importer of food, to becoming a net exporter. This, I have argued and history has shown, is the time at which genuine *and sustained* geopolitical power can be achieved: when efficient agriculture produces national food surpluses, allowing labor to be diverted to industrial production and abstract (service) uses.

Within this process, post-Cold War politicians, with no historical knowledge or comprehension of balanced social governance — or who thought that

modern society could be sustained without that clear and acknowledged balance — began to take charge. The result was that the politicians moved their focus to where the electoral power resided: the cities.

This process has led to the destruction of the British House of Lords, with the consequence that British governance is now, essentially, about London. [Changes mooted in the House of Lords in 2012 failed to address the problem caused by Blairite political opportunism, and promised a further move away from the ideals which had been rooted in the natural evolution of Britain as a balanced island society, or set of societies.] Britain, then, as a balanced society and producer of surplus foodstuffs and industrial output, continued to exist in 2012 almost by default, if it could still, in fact, be said to exist in that form. The Labour Party Government under former Prime Minister Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, acted as though Britain could be sustained as a “service economy”, a “post-industrial society”. [The subsequent Coalition Conservative-Liberal Government of Prime Minister David Cameron failed to address this fundamental change of British character when it was elected in 2010.]

In the US, and particularly in Australia, where the senates were constitutionally empowered to protect the interests of the geographic states rather than the individual voters, senators themselves forgot their mandate and they, too, played (and still play) the politics of the urban societies which have forgotten their societies’ essential partnership with geography and the organic and inorganic inhabitants of it. Indeed, the survival of senators, to some degree, depends heavily on appealing to urban voters in their states, even though their senatorial mandate is to look after

the geography, the context, the state, rather than the individual.

Urbanization effectively gerrymanders power into the cities, and away from the balance of life which is determined by an appropriate relationship between human society and its environment.

Whereas once sovereign statehood evolved to account for races or communities of common identity which had filled out, or dominated, geographic areas on which they depended, modern societies abstracted themselves from this relationship because advancing technology enabled societies to survive without direct relationship to their immediate geography. The evolution of agricultural surpluses meant that — provided trade and peace could be sustained, and this meant that belief or trust in the value of currency could be maintained — the necessity to relate a society directly to its means of survival was no longer obvious or directly apparent. The old premise of building urban societies at the co-location of, say, iron, coal, and water was no longer seen as necessary.

The reality is, of course, that human society is still dependent on its landscape, but now technology has provided — during times of stable and prosperous economic life — the ability to avoid co-location of society with the source of its sustenance. That, however, presupposes stability of social relations, logistics, and wealth.

We are, for the first time in the post-Cold War era, about to see that pattern of stability challenged.

Human progress, as I emphasized in *The Art of Victory*, has relied on the accretion of tool-building, generation by generation. Those tools include physical as well as intellectual tools, but all evolve from man's im-

plicit need to interact with, and prosper from, his surroundings. We build intellectual tools and physical tools which have related to what is necessary to survive. We also rely on an implicit *genetic memory* — sometimes referred to as “inherited memory” or “ancestor syndrome” — which clearly resides within us, and which has yet to be fully understood, but which clearly helps relate us to the natural surroundings in which our forefathers, and ourselves, have lived.

We have, in many respects, attempted to ignore — or have had the luxury to ignore — the origins and continuing nature of our relationship to our context: the geographic and species partnership. Nothing either in ourselves or in our geographic and biological context has been left unmodified. The massive and ongoing human burning of Australian landscape from the time of the Continent’s first immigrants, some 40,000 years ago, in order to control hunting led to the extinction of entire animal species and created the landscape which Australians must address today, for example. We modify the land; the land modifies us; it changes and evolves our logic of survival. This is an ongoing process.

The constitutional, or governance, ramifications of the geo-human interface are, therefore, becoming clear. However, as human numbers and human density patterns increase, the linkage between *individual* responsibility and human survival appears to diminish. In other words, the traditional and direct link between human groups and their means of survival (food, water, shelter, tools) has *appeared* to diminish as we not only urbanize, but “out-source” our vital supplies. Thus, the perceived need of governance mechanisms to provide that rural review of “urban”

legislation so that it is matched by, or accords with, geographic and non-human factors has been diminished, or become lost.

Do we need a House of Lords, a Senate committed to the needs of the states, and constitutional frameworks which demand that centers of power respect geography as well as individual voters? These are things we need to consider as we re-build societies emerging from the Age of Transformation. Certainly, however, we cannot merely abolish or willfully change the tools we evolved to provide wise government without consideration of how we will, in future, address our need to provide the food and protection we need.

* * *

I have not dwelled heavily or perhaps sufficiently on the obvious and seemingly inexorable shift of the voting preponderance of the United States of America to the great urban centers. The results can be seen in the move from states which predominantly voted conservatively — in favor of production and private enterprise; essentially freedom — to those which have predominantly voted in favor of statist solutions and dependence. Ultimately, then, US society must come increasingly under the sway of the urban voter, with the urban mindset which disregards the classical, balanced economy.

That will continue to occur unless there is a seismic, tectonic shift in the US position, probably caused by internal collapse, or external threat.

A similar situation prevails in Australia, but has prevailed for a longer period. The bulk of Australia's population is in the Continent's South-East, based around the great cities of Sydney and Melbourne. That is, then, where the votes are to be found. A disproportionately large portion of the national revenues, however, comes from the sparsely popu-

lated state of Western Australia, which has less than one-tenth the national population, and hence lacks voting power. The result is that the great population, under “democracy”, can take, with relative impunity, the bounty created by the powerless minority. A similar situation applies in Nigeria, where most of the national wealth is created by the few energy-rich states of the Niger Delta, but is spent by the great proportion of the population outside the Delta. And the situation is mirrored, too, in Canada.

In all of these instances, the only protection for the vital and wealth-producing — yet sparsely-populated — areas lies in the constitutional caveats of an earlier time which created a federal structure giving rights not just to people, but to states or provinces. What we have seen in Australia and Nigeria, in particular, is a gradual but purposeful tide by the majority to destroy federalism, and to overturn or trammel the constitutional rights afforded to the component states.

Centralism of power is very much attuned, then, to the growth of urban city-states. Ultimately, however, it destroys the balance in the overall nation-state, functioning as it does in the belief that territory can be controlled from distant cities, and pillaged at will. Such moves ultimately lead to the destruction of the nation-state through failure to give appropriate stature to *balance*, and to the regions, or through political or physical revolt.

In Nigeria, we have already seen the revolt begin. It simmers in the “advanced” societies, and other “democracies”.

The population of the United States of America which, even in 2000, would have shrugged off, disregarded, or been outraged at suggestions that some of its states may consider secession from the Union, in 2012 heard without comment serious cries, from serious people, about the prospect of secession. And as the fissiparous tendencies — the tendency

of parts to fly centrifugally off from the center — accelerate among segments of societies, there will be a countervailing tightening of central powers of the state, and the emergence of draconian autocracy. We will address this in Chapter XVI, on the prospect of “Cæsarism by Stealth”.

There can be no doubt: larger states move closer to break-up the more they become dominated by the cities and by the costly bureaucracies which those urban clusters generate. But before they fragment, the cities of power will become as rapacious of their own nation’s countryside as an invading horde from another culture. It is already happening.

Now we need to look at *why* urban societies unconsciously — or blindly — place themselves at risk.

“[T]he Culture suddenly hardens, it mortifies, its blood congeals, its force breaks down, and it becomes Civilization.”

— Oswald Spengler in *The Decline of the West*

IX

Why Urban Societies Place Themselves at Risk

“When we get piled upon one another in large cities, as in Europe, we shall become as corrupt as in Europe.”

— Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) in a letter to James Madison
(December 20, 1787).

POWER IN ALL ITS FORMS FOCUSES increasingly in the cities. The vast tracts of nations fall at the feet of the metropolises, and the power of the cities has been enshrined through the democratic allocation of votes which guarantees the might of these citadels. Parisians view all of France and the once-proud duchies and territories as mere garden to feed the capital; mines to feed its forges. New York City drives much of the agenda of the US. In Australia, it is “Sydney or the bush”: all or nothing, in the eyes of Sydneysiders. The nation-state is perceived in the city as the mere extension and vassal of the urban mass.

Thus is the state forgotten and at peril.

And yet the world’s great societies in the West — expressed by these urban masses — have become increasingly risk-averse (and yet concurrently reckless in their disregard of historical lessons) — both as individuals and as nations — at a time of unprecedented wealth. Why this contradiction? The answer has less to do with the belief that they have

more than ever to lose by risk, and more to do with changing patterns of social interdependency which are now dominated by urban thinking.

As well, urban societies come to disregard history and regard themselves as “post-history”, in the sense that the tendency is to view industrial and agricultural activity as being of little import to the “post-industrial” urban world.

This reflects the reality that humanity’s growing numbers have inexorably transformed us, much as the changing seasons steal upon us, unnoticed at first, and then profoundly. Not just our numbers, but the fact that populations have been enabled to grow because of wealth; and wealth has grown as we have mastered new tools. One of the tools of the growth of wealth has been the city. Now, more people of the world live in urban areas than in rural areas. Wealth enables cities; cities enable wealth. Some estimates indicate that, by 2050, three-quarters of the global human population would live in cities.

That estimate is predicated on linear extrapolations of current trends, including the belief that technology — and the economies which enable it — would continue to improve and spur efficiencies which could continue to increase agricultural productivity improvements to support the urban majority. This is highly problematic, as are all linear projections. Even without evidence of the current (and anticipated) economic dislocations around the world, history tells us that economic trends are cyclical and not linear, and that there are always disruptions.

The anticipation by some economists of substantial economic dislocation — a more severe down-cycle than the historical norm — over the coming decade or so implies that technological growth may not be as capable of sustaining population growth and urbanization as was the case during the Cold War period. Even the current economic

malaise in the US, the European Union, and such places as the Philippines, has already stirred urban unrest. What would a truly severe downturn in food and viable water supply to urban areas do, politically?

However, the now-entrenched reality of urban-dominated societies has transformed all human interaction and politics. We've already raised the issue of "Urban Geopolitics". However, it may be that the most profound transformation of human society as a result of population growth and urbanization has been in the way in which it gradually erodes individual self-reliance. Urban society is less fixed on the mix of self-reliance and formal (but deep) human relationships for mutual survival and support than rural, agrarian life. Urban life depends more on remote, or indirect, relationships, such as corporate or institutional employment and financial hierarchies.

This may sound subtle, in terms of differences between the *ancien regime* and today's societies. Indeed it is. And it is this subtlety which disguises the process of profound change which has been occurring. What about it, then, is so profound as to be strategic in its implications?

Urbanization and the human integration into the "greater machine" of modern life substantially reduces the opportunity for most people to act autonomously, or with a great degree of self-reliance. It is true that modern social structures enhance the opportunity for entrepreneurship because of the diversity and complexity of options and choices in modern life, as opposed to traditional agrarian life. However entrepreneurship is *not* the norm for most people, who generally must comply with extensive horizontal and vertical social hierarchies — often formally unarticulated — as well as the mechanics of complying with the tools which make urban society work. These tools are heavily focused around electricity, both directly and in-

directly.

So to function, or even to move, it is necessary to comply with the mechanical shape of society, and to accept the “value chain” which keeps the lights on, the telephone working, and the computers functioning. The benefits for being inside such a working system are enormous. Health-care is facilitated; so, too, is viable accommodation against the elements; and the ability to access the network of food and potable water supplies. Life is generally healthier and more productive when the system works, especially for the individual who commits *to* the system.

The importance of social compliance and conformity, then, becomes compounded with the growth of complex urbanization. This is less obvious to perceive than mere (or more direct) Pavlovian response, but it is the same gene at work. Moreover, given the fact that urban society functions at a more abstract level than agrarian life — urban survival is not geared to *direct* tilling of the land nor the killing of beasts — then it is also increasingly the case that some “truths” (or the realities of how complex societies work in terms of full supply chain and related security and value structures) are often less clear or appear incidental to city dwellers.

Little wonder, then, that in an age of more extensive literacy and education than at any other in history (even allowing for considerable leeway in the interpretation or depth of those attributes in modern society), it remains as easy today to create political and fashionable social conformity as it has been throughout history. And social conformity is, as most psychological warriors can attest, the introduction of often logic-defying fashionable beliefs: arguments or positions reduced *ad absurdum* to slogans, and sustained independently of facts or knowledge.

Given the difficulty for most urban societies to under-

stand that their fundamental need for water and food security is something which will not be met automatically; and given the increasing dependence of (particularly) the (urban) individual on the integrated “electrical” way of life, it becomes easy to see how fear of *non-conformity*, or fear of “disobedience” with social norms, increases as urbanization increases. There is massive, unthinking dependence on “government” to ensure the sustenance of food and water supplies, and no consideration to the non-governmental supply chain, and the rural entrepreneurship which sustains it.

The trend to social conformity — so brilliantly outlined by Elias Canetti in *Crowds and Power*, for which he won the Nobel Prize for Literature — has continued to develop because to move against conformity is to become an outcast from all that seems to make life possible, at least in the short-term.

Social conformity does not, however, preclude protest and revolution. On the contrary, social conformity *enables and produces revolution*, because revolution is reliant on an unthinking, unreasoning mob of true believers. But such protest arises only — or usually — when certainty in life is removed. This can occur through economic collapse, conflict, or hierarchical disintegration.

The most significant expression of this trend toward conformity, which grows in proportion to the importance of urban society, is the reality that *most individuals choose and prefer the certainty of oppression over the uncertainty and opportunity of freedom*.

This inevitably places rural and urban social groupings, in general terms, at odds with each other. Yet each needs the other for survival and prosperity. Clearly, balancing the needs and considering the priorities of each other is the essential ingredient in building sustainable nations and via-

ble policies. Yet this is the dilemma: each group thinks so differently from the other and views the other with distrust. This will come to a head as urban societies falter economically, and as human population trends go from a peaking of numbers to a decline in numbers over the coming few decades. We are already entering what I have termed “the global interregnum” — the age between the powers — in which vertical hierarchies are being leveled and leaders and systems changed.

When fear takes hold in urban societies — for whatever reason — then the risk escalates of systemic collapse, along with the collapse of values. Thus societies, out of fear of the loss of stability and certainty, can bring about just the outcome they seek to avoid.

Understanding that most people value stability and certainty over freedom is a key to managing the day-to-day politics of urban societies.

The long-term survival of a civilization — its Victory — is predicated on sufficient *national balance* as to ensure dominion over all of the elements of food, water, security, wealth (including raw materials and energy), and tools (which includes technology). This cannot be achieved without command of geography, sufficient to the task.

Any population movement or transformation, then, is of vital concern when considering the fate of nations. Despite this reality, the subject of “population strategy” is something which sociologists and politicians alike treat with caution, given the risk of accusations that politicians would be “playing God”. Stalin’s great forced migrations and politically-induced famines — and the parallels in Mengistu Haile Mariam’s *Dergue*-controlled Ethiopia after the regicide of Emperor Haile Selassie — and the like cause a reluctance to address “population strategy”. Yet the shaping and management of population is *exactly* what politics is about.

X

The Thinning Crowds

How and why population decline and movement will re-shape the strategic equation

ALL STRATEGIC PLANNING OVER THE coming decades will be affected by the fact that global human population numbers are beginning a process of peaking before entering a vortex of decline. This will be accompanied by a concurrent new surge in migration patterns. In many areas, population levels will fall precipitously. Some societies will see a rise in immigrants fleeing from economic disaster zones which are being decimated by population decline. Some of this will be a further surge in rural-to-urban movement; some of it will be from continent to continent, state to state.

Those states with balance, stability, and wealth will face the ruin of these attributes through — if left unchecked — transformative immigration which, locust-like, cares not about the society into which it moves, but only for the food and shelter it can provide, even for a short period.

As global population decline hits — and distorts societies — social restructuring and poverty will increasingly drive economic refugees. As with weather patterns, high pressure areas of population despair will move into low pressure areas of calm. There is, in this, no long-term vi-

sion; it is action driven by despair, envy, and dreams.

The key to strategic success will be to see how the shapes of population decline and movement will occur, and to realize that strategic power was always built around factors other than population *numbers*, but around population *viability*.

It is human to think in human-centric terms about our place in the hierarchy of nature. We believe ourselves superior to the beasts of the field and the grasses beneath our feet. All living species down to microbial levels innately or consciously believe that their own “right” to — or, rather, their “fight” for — survival and perpetuation is more important than the claims of others. Yet, as the lemmings show, no living species is immune from population expansion and contraction based on the existential factors of famine and plenty, disease, and competition.

We think of the dinosaurs, which survived and dominated the earth for about 185-million years, as creatures infinitely less capable of commanding their own destiny than humans, who have functioned for a mere six-million years, and who have mastered their environment for less than 100,000 years. Yet today we feel that we have somehow discovered the perpetual motion machine, or the alchemy which delivers eternal life. And even as science progresses on one side of the balance, so chaos and dislocation occurs on the other.

Even with this evidence of the imperfection of our situation, our hubris knows no bounds. Perhaps because of this, our memory grows weak. We believe that the progression of human numbers is linear and constantly growing, along with extensions in the term of our lifespan on earth. It is not. Our scientific achievements, however, obscure the reality that human numbers have, throughout history, ebbed and flowed. Lately we have flowed in expansion.

The ebb, which history tells us is inevitable, is about to begin.

Much of the cause of erratic but ongoing human population growth in recent years — from 300-million in 1350, to about a billion in 1804, to 2.5-billion in 1950, to seven-billion in 2012 — has been the gradual (and equally erratic) increases in *per capita* wealth, with the consequential ability of individuals to manage lifestyle and afford better diet and better healthcare. This has been assisted by the end — in the late 19th Century — of five centuries of the Little Ice Age, which brought with it weather patterns which favored predictable and productive crop cycles, and stable grasses for grazing.

But even the United Nations statisticians, great advocates of the eternal triumph of man over nature, agree that population growth rates have been tapering off, and the “low-end” UN estimates show global population going into sharp decline from a peak of some 7.5-billion in 2050. US Census Bureau reasoning on population figures for the United States through the year 2050 is based around linear extrapolations of the post-World War II experience. The Bureau expects, at the high end, that fertility levels would be at 2.6 births per woman in the years through to 2050; in the median estimate at 2.1 births; and at the low end, 1.9 births. The reality could well be far lower than that. As well, the Bureau projected a “middle” estimate of life expectancy increases from 76 years for Americans in 1993 to 82.6 years in 2050. At the low end, it estimated life expectancy for the average US citizen would be 75.3 years; and at the high end 87.5 years. These statistics assume no major breakdown in economic conditions, or in the ability to deliver healthcare and new medical breakthroughs. The Census Bureau also projected that net immigration would be from 350,000 (low end) per year through to 2050, or as much as 1,370,000

a year. “Based on the middle-series projections, the Nation’s population is projected to increase to 392 million by 2050 — more than a 50 percent increase from the 1990 population size,” according to the Census Bureau’s Jennifer Cheesman Day.

Again, this postulates the continuing appeal of the US as a destination for economic refugees. The US will clearly continue to be attractive to some immigrants, but Western Europe is beginning to demonstrate that low economic growth and poor job expectancy is also encouraging many immigrants to return to their homelands, and discouraging many new immigrants from embarking on the journey of an economic refugee. What we are seeing, in other words, is the reality that linear extrapolations of recent experience on population can be considered as little more than “interesting”. Even the US Census Bureau noted that the US population growth is slowing, because of the aging population base. But the Bureau did not take into account the profound transformation of reproduction habits which occur from intense urbanization. Significantly, all of the major US Census Bureau projections on population growth in the US until 2050 appear to have been undertaken before the schismatic changes which began to become publicly evident by about 2008.

Certain mammals — from the lemming to the kangaroo — instinctively constrain reproduction in times of lean supply. So, too, do humans adjust their reproduction rates to suit their environment and context, with the added factor (because humans are social and teaming animals) that human reproduction rates are higher when infant survival rates are lower, a situation which normally prevails in less-developed — and therefore less wealthy — societies. In this fashion, rural families have traditionally been able to ensure the availability of sufficient manpower to maintain ag-

ricultural productivity, because agriculture is a team effort. It was the gradual improvement in agricultural efficiency which enabled surplus manpower to leave the land and to find employment in towns and cities. Equally, it was the first industrial revolution which began to generate efficiencies in agricultural tools and in the ability to transport and process agricultural product.

Thus agricultural mechanization facilitated the rise of towns and cities, as the original development of organized agriculture facilitated the viability of the first real towns, those millennia ago. Modern urbanization in the late 19th and into the 20th century, however, truly began to change the context for human societies, because it provided a growing integration of wealth with technologies suited to (and demanded by) sedentary life. In particular, to make large-scale urbanization feasible (as the Romans demonstrated), it is necessary to integrate a *system* for the deliveries of energy, food, and particularly water.

[The Romans were particularly successful at city-building, and highlighted the reality that centers of power tend to automatically acquire the magnetic fascination to attract inward migration. The city of Rome, at the height of its power as the seat of the Empire, from the last phase of the Republic (from around 44 BCE, into the Imperial era until 120 CE, had a population which peaked at about one-million people. This was a vast city compared with the global population of the time. Emperor Constantine, ruling from the Eastern Roman Empire in what is now Turkey, had moved the center of power away, by 330 CE, from the city of Rome, and this led to a period of rapid population decline. The population of the city of Rome dropped to around 100,000 by 400 CE, and for the four centuries between 1000 and 1400 CE had a population of a mere 20,000 souls. Part of this was attributable to the decline of political influence

of Rome, but some was attributable to the plague, which killed at least a third of the population on the Italian Peninsula between 1347 and 1352. Even in 1550, during the Renaissance, as one Internet blogger comments²⁰, the population of Rome was only about 50,000, and didn't reach 160,000 until about 1800. The Industrial Revolution spurred population increase in all European major cities, but Rome's population in 2012 — at around four-million — marks it merely as a middling city in terms of population size.]

In the 21st Century, given the massive expansion of urban settlements over almost two millennia since Roman times, the integration of energy, food, and water delivery to the cities has become finely developed, and precariously balanced. It is so precarious that it is the life-and-death issue which hangs like a cloud — as well as a miracle of human integrative capability — over every city. We will deal with that more extensively later in the book. Suffice it, however, that we should be aware that urban populations are extremely vulnerable to even short-term interruptions to the delivery of energy. Any major interruptions to the availability of food and water also inhibit the ability of large populations to move from the path of disaster. The more wealthy and powerful the cities, the more that they are dependent on the finely-balanced technological deliverables, all of which are energy-linked. Even those who are resident in the poorer large cities of the world are aware, though, that the large families which were necessary for rural life become an impediment to wealth — even to survival — in cities in which they merely become additional mouths to feed, and bodies to house, in the increasingly competitive demand for real estate.

The parallel with the collapse of Roman civilization — or

20 <http://davidgalbraith.org/trivia/graph-of-the-population-of-rome-through-history/2189/>

rather, Greco-Roman civilization — is apposite. Spengler noted: “At this level all Civilizations enter upon a stage, which lasts for centuries, of appalling depopulation. The whole pyramid of cultural man vanishes. It crumbles from the summit, first the world-cities, then the provincial forms and finally the land itself, whose best blood has incontinently poured into the towns, merely to bolster them up awhile. At last, only the primitive blood remains, alive, but robbed of its strongest and most promising elements.”

But it is not merely urbanization which causes a retraction of reproduction rates. Poverty, or the fear of it, constrain the urge to bring children into the world. Demographers at the US Center for Disease Control (CDC) released analysis in 2011 which showed that fewer US women of childbearing age were choosing to have babies in the face of the then-deepening US economic crisis. Census data had shown that in 2010, 18.8 percent of women aged 40 to 44 were childless, a statistic which echoed a large-sample (100,000) trend in 1935 — the height of the Great Depression — when 19.7 percent of women aged 25 in the US were childless, and would remain so. This was of keen interest to demographers studying the economic malaise which struck the US — and much of the Western world — in 2008 and continued through 2012. The total number of births in the US in 2010 dropped seven percent over the 2007 figure.

Significantly, the problem was, by 2011, beginning to be seen as much worse in the People’s Republic of China, which, in the first decade and more of the 21st Century saw some of the world’s most rapid urbanization. Moreover, the PRC’s population was moving toward a ballooning of ageing population which, by 2040, was projected to have a far higher proportion of citizens 65 years of age or older than the United States. And in urban PRC societies, the fer-

tility rate by 2011 was “extraordinarily low”.²¹ Moreover, the issue of the PRC’s diminishing population numbers faces the impact of substantial health risks posed by pollution, causing rising incidences of cancer (including what have been said to be 450 “cancer villages”, clustered in heavily-polluted areas). These, and diet-driven ailments such as diabetes (as in the West), combine to drive down life expectancy in the PRC, and there seemed little prospect of this situation improving by 2020 or 2030.²²

We can easily see how family size naturally diminishes with wealth and urbanization, but there are other factors which are now confluencing to determine the speed with which population decline will occur. What is significant is that absolute population levels are only part of the equation. Population dispersal patterns become equally significant. Let me list some of the broad factors, because there are innumerable sub-sets to these patterns, and all of the factors interact:

1. The impact of wealth on population growth and decline: There is no accurate standard to measure wealth within a society or between societies, or to compare it accurately down the millennia. We tend, in this era, to apply financial statistics to the equation, but that provides only a superficial relativity, because currency value is transitory and arbitrary. But if we define wealth in terms of the relative ability to provide food, potable water, shelter, life-sustaining care, and comforts (measurable in infant mortality rates and lifespan), then the human soci-

21 Nicholas Eberstadt, “Asia-Pacific Demographics in 2010-2040: Implications for Strategic Balance”, in Ashley J. Tellis, Andrew Marble, and Travis Tanner, eds., *Asia’s Rising Power and America’s Continued Purpose*. Seattle, Washington, 2010: National Bureau of Asian Research; p.247.

22 This, and other issues relating to PRC demography and strategic power, are discussed in detail in an excellent study by Dr Andrew S. Erickson and Gabe Collins, of the US Naval War College, entitled “China’s S-Curve Trajectory: Structural Factors Will Likely Slow the Growth of China’s Economy and Comprehensive National Power”, published in *China SignPost* #44, August 15, 2011.

ety in the latter 20th and early 21st centuries has almost certainly been its at its wealthiest global average *per capita* level ever. This average wealth growth has occurred despite the concurrent explosive growth in population numbers in the past century, making the growth in the delivery of food, potable water, energy, and manufactures in total nothing short of stupendous.

The ability to provide all of the factors of wealth (as described above) in abundance to a greater spread of the world's population than before, at the same time that infant mortality rates have declined (ie: more people live through the birthing process); average life expectancy has increased (ie: more people live longer); and fewer people have succumbed to illnesses which once were more broadly fatal (ie: more people live longer) result, axiomatically, in population increase. The wealth factors involved facilitated this, partly by the process of urbanization which makes healthcare an easier deliverable, and which assists in the collegial aspects of research, development, and production of medicines and controllable food and water standards. All of this is fairly fundamental.

To achieve this, however, has required a complex fusion of population movement into urban areas, the ability to amass large-scale capital (which is a highly-advanced component of tool-building, because it involves building a society which trusts multiple abstract instruments), the ability to manage and service large urban societies, the ability to remotely and efficiently sustain the even delivery of food and water, and the ability to deliver all the energy required to facilitate these functions.

The process of city-building is, in many ways, reaching its peak, because the bulk of human society has now already moved into urban areas, but the migration has by

no means finished. This process has progressively channeled rural — and in many respects traditional — populations into towns and cities, and the first generations of this mass migration have brought with them the larger families and the concept of a need for larger families. Thus far, then, the process has largely been one of moving this growing population from rural areas to urban areas: a one-for-one move.

As the rural populations become urbanized, however, a variety of changes occur. Larger families are seen as less desirable. Marriage and parenthood are delayed and, more than at any other time in history, many people go through life childless. We discussed earlier the impact of the general economic condition on the choice to bear children. There are a number of reasons for this, including the different competitive stresses which are placed on urban dwellers, including the sacrifice of parenthood — and often marriage — for material security and progress. But there is also a lower need, in cities, for true social interaction. Teamwork is less needed than in rural situations. It is at this point that we see reproduction rates begin to decline, as the second and third generations of urban denizens transform their lifestyles. In this new lifestyle, great — and historically unnatural — stresses also occur, often suppressing reproduction just as drought constrains the growth of kangaroo families.

In advanced urban economies, then, population growth only occurs through immigration (which depletes population levels in the areas of origin), and not through replacement birthrates. This transforms the nature of the societies to the point at which they must attempt to make immigrant communities fit into the ethos which originally created the wealth-generating and security-enabling formula of the society so that the suc-

cessful formula can be perpetuated. This is a problem which is compounded because immigrant families (from rural areas or from totally different parts of the world) bring with them for a generation or two the higher reproduction rates and different values, thus accelerating the transformation of their new host states.

There are, of course, many great metropolises which continue to expand because their relative appeal to their hinterlands or to foreigners is that they offer the illusion of greater wealth and security than the outlying lands. But, as indicated, we are over the hump in this regard: more people already live in cities, and the relative appeal of cities may also be beginning to decline.

The net effect, however, is that while population movement to the cities continues, its pace and potential are declining; and the lower urban birthrate is beginning to take effect. This process will continue to compound as rural-to-urban migration progresses.

Wealth and urbanization have combined to create a society which now totals more than half of humanity and which is more sedentary than any previous generation. This began to show in medical statistics by the turn of the 21st Century. The incidence of diabetes — the result of richer diets and sedentism — rose dramatically, and early-onset diabetes began to show in children. This points to an imminent impact on lifespan statistics as the complications arising from the disease reached pandemic proportions.

The Wall Street Journal, on June 27, 2011, cited the British Medical Association journal, *Lancet*, with details of a study which showed that the number of people in the world with adult diabetes had climbed to 347-million from 153-million in 1980. The US had 24.7-million adult diabetes sufferers, nearly triple the level only three

decades earlier. These statistics included Type One and Type Two diabetes sufferers. Some 70 percent of the increase was attributed to the increased life-span of modern societies, but about 30 percent was attributable to changing diets, obesity, and increasing the lifestyle of sedentism²³. Diabetes, which shortens life-spans, was also set to be a major cost for most health systems. Significantly, some 138-million adult diabetes sufferers lived — at the time of the survey — in the People's Republic of China. But the disease, worldwide, was now showing increasingly in children.

The economic impact of population reduction is unlikely to occur — for the most part — with the rushing impact of a *tsunami*, but will occur incrementally, albeit with considerable speed. Importantly, population re-

23 Sedentary lifestyles are now being shown to have a direct and adverse effect on longevity and health. My friend and colleague, the renowned Dr Joan Vernikos, the former Director of Life Sciences at the US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and now a leading researcher and author on issues of ageing (she was responsible for getting US Sen. John Glenn back in space to study this issue), has made trenchant observations concerning the impact of urban-oriented sedentism. In her 2011 book, *Sitting Kills; Moving Heals: How Simple Everyday Movement Will Prevent Pain, Illness, and Early Death — and Exercise Alone Won't*, she noted: "The state of health in the world is deteriorating. In the United States, two out of every three people are unhealthy. ... The culprit is neither a virus nor a toxic pollutant. The enemy is a transformation in lifestyle that probably saw its beginnings with urbanization during the Industrial Revolution. A change from physically working the land and needing hearty meals was now followed by standing in factory assembly lines while eating just as much, particularly carbohydrates. This shift accelerated in the 20th Century, when even more sedentary forms of work were accompanied by eating more food than required by the body. ... Affluence and cars for most families diminished physical activity even more." Dr Vernikos' findings have been confirmed by a 2012 study at the University of Sydney, which showed that sitting down for more than three hours a day could cut an individual's life expectancy by two years, and that watching television for more than two hours a day could exacerbate the problem and decrease expectancy by a further 1.4 years. An earlier study in Australia showed that people who said that they watched television for more than four hours a day were 46 percent more likely to die of any cause than people who said that they spent less than two hours a day watching television. And those watching television for more than four hours a day were also 80 percent more likely to die of cardiovascular disease. [See also: *Sitting time and all-cause mortality risk in 222,497 Australian adults*. van der Ploeg H.P., Chey T., Korda R.J., Banks E., Bauman A. Source: Sydney School of Public Health, University of Sydney, Sydney, NSW 2006, Australia.]

duction in wealthier areas will, as noted earlier, be compensated by immigration from poorer areas, a feature of current population movement. Indeed, this has been the hallmark of population movement throughout history. What will certainly be evident is a lowering of societal infrastructure requirements, as population pressures ease. We have seen this in the recent past as cyclic trends in birth rates add or remove pressures on the building of new schools, or the closing of all or parts of older ones, particularly in urban areas.

There will be a significant easing of energy demand globally, and this will have many ramifications. It is likely to spell an easing of prices for oil and gas, as demand reduces. This will have the effect of pushing further into the future considerations of the end of the availability of oil. But it will also mean that remote — deep, difficult access — deposits of oil will not be pursued because of cost issues. This in turn means that, because the market demand (and prices) are weakened, investment in the development of new non-carbon energy sources will be less urgent and attractive. On the other hand, there will be a gradual decline in carbon output, easing pollution concerns.

As a result, the “non-carbon options” in the energy sphere which will have a major impact on the world will be those developed to the point of efficiency only over the coming decade. After that, it should be expected that the market climate — and political support — for “alternative energy sources” will not be sustainable. This may not stop the development of innovative approaches to the use of coal, for example, given that coal remains a major source of energy, and coal-to-liquid fuel efficiency should be reached by 2020, making coal a major player into the mid-21st Century, and possibly beyond.

2. The impact of economic dislocation on population

levels: It is relatively easy to see, then, how wealth assists urbanization, and how urbanization improves wealth levels and therefore life expectancy and infant mortality rates. It is equally easy to see how urban lifestyle diminishes the need and desire for — and possibly the ability to achieve — replacement levels of human reproduction. What happens, then, when the situation is compounded by economic slowdown or collapse? Firstly, individuals stricken by sudden poverty — or even gradual-onset poverty and unemployment or underemployment — cut back on healthcare expenditures. The poorest levels of society forsake professional healthcare almost entirely. People, particularly in the lower economic brackets, thus die earlier than their wealthier counterparts, on average. This ultimately also impacts on labor availability, driving labor force distortions and increasing the cost of manufacturing and services.

Secondly, economic downturns affect the availability of funds for medical research and development, slowing the pace of medical breakthroughs even for the wealthy, who are willing to pay almost any price for treatment. Thirdly, severe economic dislocation generates — perhaps faster than any other cause save war — a flow of refugees from areas of poverty to areas which are relatively better off. As mentioned earlier, this is as predictable as weather patterns which determine that areas of high pressure air (in this case, economic distress) move into areas of low atmospheric pressure (in this case, equating to areas represented by economic opportunity). [The weather pattern equation works also for areas of political vacuum, which automatically cause “high pressure” forces, or societies with motivated political leadership, to move into areas of political vacuum.] This process of

economic migration has been evident on a global scale for the past two centuries, in particular. It has now reached the scope of viral contagion.

3. The impact of population decline on wealth and stability: It takes time for equilibrium to be restored after any major disruption, and humans usually re-group and adapt. Much of Europe prospered after the Black Death of the 14th Century, which served to consolidate inherited wealth in the hands of survivors, thus enabling a period of larger and more efficient landholdings, and the ability to amass greater capital for larger projects. We know that the 21st Century population declines will be different from that medieval example, but we do not yet know exactly where the differences will lie.

Almost certainly, there will be different reactions in different areas of the world, depending on the levels and patterns of population transformation.

In the event that population decline causes asset valuation collapse in urban areas — unless that process can be managed over the space of at least a decade or more to cushion the fall — then urban employment opportunities should be expected to decline in service industries. Given the economic dislocation which presently coincides with the world entering a new population model (a mix of population movement and declining reproduction in many areas), it is likely that currency values and trade levels will be affected.

On the assumption that agricultural efficiency continues, there may be little call for urban people to return to rural areas, except for quality of life considerations or — for economic and other reasons — subsistence farming. Given a tapering off, and then decline, in population levels, the agricultural community may well be looking at the prospect of massive surpluses of food and other

agricultural products, which translates into declining prices at market. Given other trade and economic considerations, this may strengthen the appeal of devoting larger sectors of the agricultural industry to bio-fuel production. This would also fall in with the trend toward greater self-sufficiency and balance in national management, and greater isolationism in international affairs.

Overall, this would lead to societies which are more pragmatic and industrially productive. Wealth would — assuming the society remains stable — move gradually back to the manufacturing sector, both for entrepreneurs and workers alike. Those societies with the greatest engineering skills would prosper most. Much of the world's population, however, would return to subsistence farming, and the “wealth bubble” of the 20th Century would, for them in particular, vanish.

All of this assumes a relatively gradual and even decline in population levels. Where economic dislocation causes violent fluctuations in population movement, and feeds epidemic and pandemic situations, it should be expected that there would be random bites taken out of certain population sectors. As we have seen in Africa when pandemics strike, suddenly a percentage of the teachers are no longer at schools; a number of truck drivers are gone from the roads; and companies and government departments find their workforces hollowed out. The training of replacement workers is geared to more generational re-supply than it is to rushing stop-gap replacements into the work force. This “hollowing out” of the work-force can have a profound impact on economic stability.

- 4. The influence of conflict on population levels and dispersal:** War, in Malthusian terms, does little on its own to blunt population growth rates, or to create global-

level population decline. World War I saw an estimated 16.5-million combatants and civilians killed and some 21-million injured, with many of those injured suffering with life-shortening consequences. The Spanish influenza (H1N1) pandemic of 1918-1920 saw between 50-million and 100-million deaths worldwide (cutting three to six percent from the world's population), and the triggering of a worldwide outbreak of *encephalitis lethargica* in the 1920s. It is worth asking, however, whether the influenza pandemic became a global phenomenon because of the globalizing aspects of World War I. “Malthusian consequences”, then, are more subtle and pervasive than might at first seem to be the case.

The impetus given to R&D by major wars has historically created or inspired scientific advances which have given thrust to new generations of medical scientific breakthroughs, or evolutions in practices. These range from improvements in nursing (as in the Crimean War example from 1853-56) to the mass introduction of penicillin in World War II (after its discovery in 1928). Such developments could be termed “counter-Malthusian” tendencies.

War, however, as the 1918-1920 Spanish influenza example shows, has another profound impact on populations in a less direct way than battlefield casualties. War tends to give a profound impetus to the spread of many diseases, and the post-Great War influenza pandemic was one such case. HIV-AIDS is of even greater note, especially in African conflict zones. In the case of internal conflict, such as in Zimbabwe — in which the population has essentially been hostage to a small power clique for several decades to this point — the HIV-AIDS pandemic has led to such lowered immune systems across most of the society that an entirely new strain of tuber-

culosis has been created, and was, by 2012, potentially looming with the capability to spread onto the world stage as a new pandemic. There was, as of 2012, no known cure for the variety of the disease.

As well, other diseases reappear, such as the new epidemic of measles in Zimbabwe, which became evident by the early 21st Century.

But where conflict really has a rapid and direct impact on population levels, country-by-country, is in creating refugee flows. This often moves populations from one nation-state to another, but it also creates internal refugee flows which skew political and economic trends.

5. The influence of population levels and movement on

conflict: Lifestyles are determined by population dispersal dynamics and locations, because these factors affect *the logic patterns* of various groups: what is logical for survival in rural communities is different from the logic needed to survive in cities. There tends to be a belief that logic is immutable, but that is not borne out by reality. It varies according to the geography and population groupings; it is determined by natural geopolitics, and the reverse (human conscious geopolitical planning) is also true.

There is little doubt — as we have discussed in earlier chapters — that the schism between urban and rural lifestyles has become more pronounced since the start of the Second Industrial Revolution. That began in roughly 1700. The process arguably continues to this time if we look at “industrial” as also including all forms of physical and urban-intellectual tool-building. It is unlikely that the French Revolution (1789-99) and French Civil War (1870) and consequent Franco-Prussian War; the profoundly urban-rural schism which resulted in the US Civil War (1860-65); the Russian Revolution; the rolling

Chinese revolutions from the late 19th Century onward; the Iranian and Egyptian revolutions of the 20th and 21st centuries; and so on, would have occurred absent the movement of people into cities with the profound changes in thinking which urban lifestyle and logic demands over rural lifestyle and logic.

The Bosnia-Herzegovina civil war of the 1990s was also a classic example of a war between urban and rural cultures. Not surprisingly, the Western (urban) media sided with the urban Muslims against the “injustice” of the rural Serbs’ ownership of some 64 to 65 percent of the land, when the Serbs represented merely 37 percent of the population.²⁴ The Serbs were farmers! Do we, as a consequence of judging this inequity, see moves to address the inequity of farmers in the US for their ownership of more land than their urban fellow-citizens? What was significant in Bosnia-Herzegovina is that, after the land was expropriated from the farmers it has lain fallow, and the urban Bosniaks have shown no interest in agriculture. The Serbs were forced into the enclave of Republika Srpska, a sub-state of Bosnia-Herzegovina, where they remain agriculturally productive, but with far less land than before the civil war. But that war, as of 2012,

24 The question of land ownership by the various factions — which are not ethnic groups — in Bosnia-Herzegovina before the civil war has been muddled by revisionist (and largely anti-Serbian) propaganda since the war. This writer spent considerable time in the former Yugoslavia covering the war of the 1990s, and wrote extensively on the propaganda and psychological warfare tools employed. Significantly, however, the main division between the Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian Muslims (who now call themselves “Bosniaks”) is cultural. The Ottoman conquest of Bosnia, which was first able to dominate the region with the *Eyalet* (administration) of Bosnia in 1527, ensured that those who wished to do business in the towns and cities had to be Muslim, so those of the native Serbian population living in Bosnian towns and cities converted to Islam. They are, today, then, still the same ethnic stock as those who call themselves Serbs, but today they have an urban — and, by cultural adoption, Muslim — lifestyle and logic pattern. Similarly, even before the US Civil War, US citizens from the Northern states were essentially of the same ethnic and religious mixes as those of the Southern states, but had developed into substantially different cultures and logic patterns due to their geographic dispersal and economic activities.

was far from resolved.

To see how urbanization affects everything over time, it is worth looking at the case of the US population surge into the cities from the late 19th Century until the early 21st Century, much of it by inward immigration from abroad. The first generation of migrants tended to focus on practical, material skills as makers or merchants. The second generation in the cities tended more to abstract service skills. The third and fourth generations of the more successful migrant families moved into even more abstract service skill sectors, such as the law, accounting, academia, and finance.

We had seen this pattern in other cultures: in Britain with the evolution of a population sector created to govern in public service; in China with the creation of a “mandarin” class. The emergence of these groups tended to come before — even perhaps to precipitate — empire collapse when their urbanized thinking, their politics, overshadowed and overruled the “manufacturing class” and the rural, food-producing classes. By this generation, family size had also declined from the size of their grandparents’ and great-grandparents’ families.

6. The influence of health, including pandemics, on population levels and dispersal: The most significant impact which disease pandemics, which we have discussed, have on population is not just on absolute numbers. Disease pandemics are primarily important in the impact they have on the viability of the impacted societies, because the diseases tend to eliminate key people in the hierarchical and productively chains. They can hollow out societies, dramatically cutting productivity and general wellbeing.

The World Health Organization (WHO) in 2011 reported that more than one-billion adults worldwide

were overweight, a third of these obese, and in great susceptibility to diabetes — to which we referred earlier — and heart disease, and therefore a life of inhibited productivity before a premature death. The US Center for Disease Control (CDC) also, in 2011, noted that US average life expectancy had leveled off and was beginning to decline, with 80 percent of US counties showing life expectancy levels lower than the “longest-life” societies.

7. The impact of environmental issues on population levels and dispersal: King Canute (or Cnut, who ruled from 985 or 995 to 1035 CE, over Denmark, England, Norway, and part of Sweden) showed his subjects that he could not, with all his power, hold back the tide, which was in the power of God, to whom all aspects of nature were then ascribed. All species, in fact, have had to make way for the power of nature, and human groups have constantly moved their settlements and their agricultural activities to accord with the trends of nature. Those climatic patterns are in constant, if relatively gradual, movement.

Ten millennia ago, perhaps more, the sea began lapping higher in parts of the world, and the settlements at the foot of the Indus River Valley, in what is now the Arabian Sea, were gradually lost to the sea, as were many towns and cities around the coast of present-day India and Sri Lanka. They lay, still, these stone remnants of the ancient civilizations, beneath the sea. Their populations saw this erosion of their cities and were compelled to move.

In the early centuries of the great trading days of sail by the European powers, ships sailed south through the Atlantic and rounded the Cape of Good Hope, Africa’s Southernmost reach, and began their voyage across the Indian Ocean to the spice islands of South-East Asia. But

to the south of Africa beat the strong trade winds, the Roaring Forties which swept the 40th parallel of latitude South, running from West to East. The ships took advantage of this wind for as long as they dared, before turning North to the Indies. Many left their turning too late, or could not escape the driving, constant winds — which on normal days blow at a steady 15 knots — and were driven ashore along the South-Western Australian coast. For many sailors it became their final rest. But it also determined, in 1829, the fact that the great British settlement should be on the Swan River — where Perth today stands — because it was the convenient destination for the sailing vessels of the day. There were other reasons, such as the seeming availability of fresh water and viable land, but it was a destination discovered and prioritized by the necessities of wind.

What may be more interesting will be the impact of population decline on the environment. Without question, the abundance of the seas will return as overfishing gradually ceases. The forests will regenerate. Human-generated pollution will decline. None of this, of course, will affect the inexorable cycles of gradually-evolving changes in climate; patterns which have been moving since the earth was formed.

But the footprint of man will become lighter.

XI

When Does Size Matter?

*The positive and negative aspects of scale in
the strategic impact of population size*

IT IS NATURAL THAT WE SHOULD HAVE AN obsession with size, particularly population size. It is this which determines the spread of the human gene pool, and whether our species survives and dominates nature.

As with the lemming, or the herds of kangaroos or zebras when artificially protected from their natural rivals or threats, populations of all species can grow to the point of being counter-productive to their own good, and ultimately detrimental to their own species survival.

This argument, then, makes no value judgment on population size, large or small. What is, is. We have, essentially, the society we were born to. How we mold our birthright is the area in which we have choice. We have seen — particularly in the past half century — that mankind can find ways to create surpluses of food, potable water, shelter, and wealth even when the global population trebles in size. We have seen small population groups, through history, sometimes starve, and sometimes prosper; we have seen large populations rise and fall in wealth and power. We saw, during the Cold War period, all of Europe tremble in the face of

Japan's economic might: a great geographic and population region intimidated by a small and resource-bereft territory, with a small population, situated disadvantageously in the North-East of Asia. We saw Singapore prosper, and Argentina fail. We saw the Soviet Union fail, and the smaller Russian Federation begin to prosper.

So where does size matter?

Clearly, for states, both population and geographic size — as well as location — can have strategic weight. In the case of the British Empire, the vast global spread of territory and population had begun to turn hollow, and become unsustainable, by the late 19th Century. The certainty in Whitehall by about 1908 that there was unlikely to be another war with the US came as a relief to the British Government, which knew that it had difficulty in sustaining its worldwide projection of power. Even that was insufficient relief to allow the United Kingdom to focus its energies on the emerging threat — Germany — before World War I began in 1914.

For the People's Republic of China, too, the vastness of territory and population generated an almost ungovernable situation, until the death of Mao Zedong — the quasi-emperor — in 1976 allowed the PRC to undergo a tectonic transformation, a cratometamorphosis. Totally new approaches to governance, despite the apparent continuity of a “communist” government, began in about 1978 when Deng Xiaoping was able to consolidate his grip on power as the effective paramount leader (although never head-of-state, or head-of-government). From that point, the PRC began to transform its wealth and wealth distribution. And it was at that point that the PRC began, perhaps for the first time in history, to truly use its population size and territorial security to its advantage.

Population numbers can — when the stars are aligned —

determine the size of many institutions, particularly financial institutions. With large population societies, small fluctuations in *per capita* wealth create strategic-level leverage. In large population societies, such as the PRC and India, small upward fluctuations in average wealth results in massive collective economic leverage. This was also the case with the United States in the late 19th Century, but particularly from the mid-20th Century. It was this breakthrough which gave the US the ability to grasp global economic and strategic world leadership, taking primacy away from the United Kingdom.

What we saw in the late 19th Century was the US beginning to create a stable currency, something which took a firmer root in 1913, with the creation of the US Federal Reserve system: a national banking and currency authority. The Federal Reserve has modified over the succeeding century, but its principal rôle is to ensure currency — and therefore to a large degree economic — stability, even though currency stability alone is by no means the sum of economic stability. Indeed, national political policy by 2009 had taken precedence, by virtue of decisions to expand debt and the supply of US currency by unprecedented proportions, so that currency stability and trust were being eroded. This, along with other strategic actions, jeopardized the position of the US dollar as the global trading currency, a position it had only held for a half century or so, taking precedence gradually and then ultimately from the pound sterling.

What we see in the early 21st Century is a firm policy by the leaders of the PRC to make the *yuan* (*renminbi*) a stable currency by world standards. The PRC as a state was, by 2012, perhaps only slightly less cohesive than was the US in the late 19th Century (a quarter-century or so after a fratricidal civil war), but possibly not by much.

The main question about the PRC is whether it has durable political structures, structures sufficiently *flexible* to withstand the social pressures of the urbanizing demographic of the Chinese population. It was the national fiscal discipline and concurrent economic flexibility which gave the growing US economy at the turn of the 20th Century its great capabilities to move toward global market domination. By the early 21st Century, however, the US instruments had become more rigid and less flexible, and therefore less competitive with, say, the PRC. The parallel with the mid-20th Century is worthy of note: the ravaged, post-World War II British economy was massively undermined by the introduction of an urban-dominated, socialized system which removed flexibility and creativity from the United Kingdom's manufacturing sector.

The US, by 2012, was already mired in the same kind of urban-dominated thinking which focused — as did Prime Minister Harold Wilson's Labour Governments (1964-70 and 1974-76) and the earlier Clement Attlee Government (1945-51) in the United Kingdom — on the primacy of the state, and on the distribution of funds taken from the private sector, and the constraint of the productivity of the private sector.

So we see in these instances how urban-dominated demographics have tended to move toward command economics thinking, even though entrepreneurship itself has — in the industrial revolutionary societies — also originated largely in urban areas. In the case of Britain, particularly post-World War II, and in the US from the early 21st Century, this has reversed the gains of the earlier periods when large populations and incremental increases in *per capita* wealth had led to global economic dominance. In essence, then, *per capita* declines in wealth and productivity tend to slowly reduce strategic power in large population

societies, whereas marginal increases in wealth in large population societies can suddenly — or at least rapidly — propel these states from relatively low to relative high strategic power levels.

Demographics, then, can be a blunt instrument of strategic maneuver.

We are seeing that phenomenon with the PRC and India, but even between those two nation-states we see vast differences in their levels of success. The key for a nation to commence the process, however, is the move from nett food importer to the status of nett food exporter. It is only *that* transformation, which signifies the growth of agricultural expertise to a position of sufficient efficiency that it enables population moves from rural to urban areas. And that is what marks the start of great strategic growth. India reached that point in 1986, although it arguably did not capitalize on the transformation to the same degree that the PRC did after China, post-Mao, freed the farmers to compete in the marketplace. [It is worth noting that, as another comparison, the Republic of Korea and Nigeria had roughly equivalent gross domestic products in 1985. By 2011, the ROK had totally eclipsed Nigeria's economic performance, despite the fact that Nigeria had vastly larger population numbers. But by 2011, Nigeria was a substantial importer of food; the ROK was a nett food exporter.]

While demographics — sheer size — of a population can be an effective “blunt instrument” of strategic maneuver, the most durable aspect of grand strategic maneuver is not just the combination of numbers and self-sufficiency, but *per capita* productivity levels. These can only be brought into optimal efficiency (that is, productivity, population numbers, and self-sufficiency) when there is a common population language (which ensures efficiency), common standards of production measurement (which ensures

quality), and a relatively self-regulating (and therefore flexible over time) form of market governance.

True *per capita* — or average — productivity leadership usually translates into very significant individual wealth advantages. It is this which then trumps — or is capable of beating — the incremental wealth gains of larger societies. Australia, by 2012, for example, had a GDP only slightly less than that of India, despite the fact that India's population was some 1.3-billion whereas Australia's was some 23-million, a fifty-fold or so difference. Australia, by 2009 (and continuing through 2012), however, was beginning to see some reductions in its *per capita* workplace productivity and a continuation of this would ultimately translate into a widening strategic gap in India's favor.

Societies with small populations, therefore, must compete strategically in terms of individual productivity, and cannot afford national policies which militate against workplace efficiency or flexibility. When small populations cease to think and act creatively and indulge in unproductive or counter-productive policies, such as indulgence in spending and personal consumption instead of embracing an ethos of innovation and productivity, they can be relegated rapidly to strategic inferiority. Australia, by 2012, was moving toward this situation. By the same token, it can never be expected to compete in terms of population numbers with India or the PRC, or even the US. It has no option but to compete through innovation.

Meanwhile, large population societies have substantial inherent penalties and often unwieldy issues to manage, compared with small population countries. The PRC may look at Singapore as a "laboratory-scale model" on which to base Chinese state management, but it is certainly *not* the case that scaling up Singapore as a model for the geographically-, climatically-, and ethno-linguistically diverse China

would work. Singapore is not a viably self-sustainable nation-state by classical Westphalian measurement: it is a nett importer of food and water, for example. It is, at the very least, dependent for survival on Malaysia, just as Hong Kong is dependent on the Chinese mainland for workers, water, and food.

A society which cannot be independent in fulfilling its food requirements cannot get even to the point of industrial self-sufficiency, or, then, security self-sufficiency. Of course it is true that all states prosper by virtue of trade, but the *core* of a nation must be its balanced self-sufficiency. The cream may be what it achieves through trade. Inevitably, then, there must be a balance between rural and urban territories to make a nation-state truly sovereign.

In all of this it is worth stating, then, that throughout history the biggest population societies are not usually the most powerful; neither are the most populous cities usually the most prosperous or powerful. Scale does not guarantee success.

Urbanization equals “The War on *Terroir*”: Rather than population size, it is the balance and harmony of man, territory, and culture — what the French call *terroir* — which achieves strength and unity of purpose in a society. While the word *terroir* derives from “terre”, meaning land, it translates roughly into “a sense of place”, reflecting geography, geology, and climate, and ultimately being reflected in the food and drink produced in certain areas. All of this, then, is an interdependence of culture with place and productivity. Indeed, it is this balance with nature which creates the logic — the mechanism of human survival instincts — which is endemic to each particular society, enabling people to behave and survive in accordance with the surroundings which feed them.

It is *terroir* which creates logic: it determines how an indi-

vidual or society will react to, and survive in, its particular geographic and climatic condition. In other words, logic is not immutable; logic is what relates humankind to its surroundings, which means that logic must, perforce, vary from place to place.

Cities, then, gradually abstract their inhabitants from that basic, balanced sense of *terroir*, because the interdependence of people with the productivity of their own landscape becomes irrelevant. Urbanization means that the fundamental relationship which people have is with cash. Money, like urban living, is an abstract concept. Money means that, in prosperous, peaceful times, urban living can be sustained because the necessities of life can be purchased. Indeed, this works, except in times of political chaos, which can be induced through systemic collapse, economic disaster, natural disaster, conflict, or population fluctuation.

Urbanization, then, is “the war on *terroir*”. This does not mean that cities — even massive cities — are, or must be, unviable. It only means that at some level societies must be conscious of the need for balance between rural and urban components. The heart can no more live without the brain, than the mind without the heart. But it is clear that urbanization does disrupt the traditional patterns of society, and the links between people and their soil and waters. Essentially, this disruption challenges group and individual identity — their identity security — given that most people derive their sense of self from all of the things which reflect *terroir*: geography, social patterns and beliefs, and the customary toil which the region’s characteristics dictate.

When identity security is lost, people become disoriented, and seek to revive a sense of certainty. They begin to lash out to find their boundaries and to re-assert the survival of their way of life; their bloodline. This, in large part,

is the origin of terrorism. It is an unconscious attempt to re-assert identity and purpose. US writer Eric Hoffer, in his classic 1951 philosophical work on terrorism, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements*, understood this perfectly.

How, then, does all of this play out in the transforming shape of nations, and power *blocs*, over the coming decades? That is the area we must next address.

XII

The Emerging Shape of the World

NONE CAN WITH CERTAINTY FORETELL THE FUTURE. Even so, the shape of what we face can be shrewdly estimated with enough attention to historical trends, and if we have broad contextual understanding of our current realities; and if we have developed sufficient insight into the character of leaders, their societies, and the structures which define their basis. As we have discussed, there are no (or at least very few) “black swan events”. All we need is enough breadth of vision and contextual intelligence, coupled with wisdom and historical knowledge.

What “black swan events” there may be are the sudden acts of nature, the sudden emergence of true leadership from unexpected quarters, or key breakthroughs in science. Increasingly, in all these areas, our knowledge of vulcanology and climate or other natural sciences, or intelligence on individuals or societies, can help us forecast the probabilities of the occurrence of volcanoes, earthquakes, *tsunamis*, and social unrest. So we can hazard fairly reliable views on the shape of the world in, say, 2020 or 2030. This we must do, however, without succumbing to the fatal flaw of linear — and therefore unrealistic — extrapolations of existing conditions. We must know the current and historical baseline levels of wealth and capability from which to make our estimates.

Perhaps we need to begin with an understanding of our recent context; understanding why the world is shaped in the early 21st Century the way that it is, in terms of the structure and relative power and wealth rankings of societies, or nation-states. We have discussed the gradual progression of the industrialization and urbanization of societies over centuries, but let us look briefly at the impact of World War II. The United States of America, nicely geographically remote from much of the war, remained aloof from the conflict for as long as possible, a move which was absolutely in US interests. So it emerged from the war with a massively strengthened industrial base — which compounded and confirmed as irreversible the trend toward urban domination of US society — while all around its allies and adversaries in that war were in ruins. The US was “the last man standing”, and with considerable industrial and scientific impetus coursing through its veins, and many of the great scientific minds drifting to its shores in flight from the desolation of Europe and much of Asia.

Some other states also fared reasonably well — Canada and Australia, for example — but they lacked the great strength which the US had amassed during the war, and they had also been engaged in the great struggle from its beginning in 1939, and they, too, despite the relative safety of their geography, had been economically damaged by the war.

What we saw, then, was a world, in 1945, which the US was easily able to dominate, even though the severely damaged Soviet Union achieved a degree of what was, in hindsight, only gunpowder parity with the US. The US had almost six subsequent decades of economic leadership in a global architecture it largely created through the United Nations. There were many parents of the UN, but only the economic power of the US, and the military power of the

US as well to ensure that a *pax Americana* could be kept, enabled the late Westphalian state structures to be perpetuated.

It is easy to see how the US became complacent and gained a sense of omnipotence during those six decades, a complacency which was briefly compounded by the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990-91. But something else was happening during those six decades. Many of the nation-states left in ruin by World War II were rebuilding, and by the end of the first decade of the 21st Century, many were once again in a position to offer enormous economic and strategic challenge to the US. That process, too, was gradual, as the US felt that it could afford to “out-source” much of its manufacturing to its former adversaries and those “less fortunate”, low-wage societies. It felt it could afford to neglect engineering and scientific education, leaving that, too, to the “lesser world”. But by “assigning” education and manufacturing to that “lesser world”, the US merely contributed to the economic and strategic recovery of those states.

By 2011, perhaps even earlier, it was apparent that the US was, despite the declining international value of the US dollar, losing its ability to be competitive. Its macro-economic policies ensured that the manufacturing and construction sectors — by 2008 already beaten down to a smaller workforce than those employed as government workers — were less nimble and less productive than they once had been in comparison to their foreign rivals. The pivotal point came when non-US productivity and political cohesiveness — willpower — eclipsed that of the US. Could the US respond to the challenge? Unquestionably. But to do so would require a massive reduction of state influence in the economy, a reduction in the sense of social entitlement which corresponds to declining individual productivity, a

transformation of education patterns to favor production over consumption, and so on. For the great and loyal allies of the US since World War II — such as Britain, much of Europe, Australia, Canada, and Japan, and the like — the answer lay in also abandoning the pseudo-post-industrial model, and “getting back to work”. Some are starting to do that. Others have already swallowed whole the entitlement mentality and the belief in a “post-industrial society”, almost entirely urban, which was rife with irresponsibility.

By the early 21st Century, the US’s wealth growth was overwhelmingly driven by consumption spending. The growing areas of the non-US global economy were being driven by *production*, paralleling the situation of the late 19th and first half of the 20th centuries in the West. The US had six decades after World War II to consolidate its power. In the end, it chose to no longer compete. If it was to persist in this approach — as all political indications seemed to concur — the strategic and relative economic decline of the US (and the West) would accelerate.

It is conceivable that even in 2020, the Western world — that is, the world which still at that time chose to continue to follow the US economic model — would remain beset by the lingering of the present crisis of currency levels and economic performance. *This is essentially a mass psychological crisis.* It is based around the perceptions which create trust, particularly trust in asset values and institutions.

In some respect, historical trends have given populations in modern societies excessive trust in the ability of their institutions to remain operational, untended by their populations. As a result, governments have grown larger and less efficient, and have arrogated to themselves more and more of the resources of societies, thereby — because governments consume, not produce — inhibiting productivity. At some point, those societies, when sufficiently beleaguered

and impoverished, lose faith in the institutions of governance and leadership succession. Always remember the example of Argentina, so promising at the start of the 20th Century and yet by the beginning of the 21st still beset by the problems of economic stupidity which have not, after more than a century, been corrected.

It is possible that the end of the second decade of the 21st Century will see exactly that tipping point, at which faith — a psychological attribute — in many existing Western state structures disappears, and either rigid reaction or anomie and chaos intervene. “Rigid reaction” means that societies revert with ironclad conformity to a political correctness built around extreme nationalism or charismatic Bonapartism. This forecast is based on the existing performance of most governments of modern economies, but reactions of their societies will vary based on their individual natures, their reserves of wealth, and the degree to which government and leaders can adapt radically and rapidly to reignite and impart purpose, prosperity, and geographic-industrial *balance* to their societies. By 2012, we saw no major societies prepared to take such radical steps to reverse trends of social distrust in systems. Indeed, the accumulation of laws and customs actually makes such radical action infeasible or unlikely, except in the event of major external threat, such as war. Absent productive radical action, only a reversion to self-protection through nationalism and economic protectionism is possible.

This trend to inflexibility, and resistance to radical change (which would entail a period of discomfort and a loss of much personal wealth), has reinforced a “business as usual” attitude. People rarely see the extent of change already occurring around them; it is disguised by a continuity of visual references; and the presence of institutions which have not previously failed them. In fact, it has been

said of the modern era that institutions have evolved *specifically* to disguise change, because change appears threatening. Thus, when systems finally break down under the weight of debt, social change, and reaction, the event *appears* sudden and unexpected. Some societies will merely erode into lower expectations of their own domestic and international capabilities, and wellbeing. Many modern societies will allow themselves to decline in “a step of sighs”, occasionally rebuilding to some degree, only to resume their downward steps, unless confronted with an existential challenge which forces them to cut away the inhibiting dross of years, and infuses them with the energy to respond.

So, then, the coming decade promises a continuation of the declining fortunes in many major modern economies, absent the catalyst to reverse the trend. How can successful societies insulate themselves from the fevers of others?

And if Western societies falter, will new societies step forward to claim wealth and power? Not necessarily. There is no guarantee of continued growth in the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of Korea (RoK), the Russian Federation, or India. Each have their frailties, and each are dependent on the global wealth to varying degrees. It would be reckless to over-state the resilience of the PRC, Indian, and even Russian economies, bearing in mind their own institutional constraints, internal frailty, and their low *per capita* wealth. Even more important is the fact that each of these societies, again in varying measure, have failed to build the granite base of self-confidence within their societies as to the durability and infallibility of their national hierarchies and trust in their assets and instruments of value.

We see the ongoing lack of a global reserve currency, for example, to replace the United States dollar, because nei-

ther the PRC's *yuan*, the Indian *rupee*, the Russian *ruble*, nor the *euro* were yet — as of 2012 — greeted with true global credibility. How, then, do we measure wealth, and power, absent a currency yardstick? At some point soon, the PRC's *yuan* (*renminbi*) may, because of the mere strength of the PRC strategically, be “believed” and become “trusted”, regardless of whether it has what we now think of as the necessary levels of backing or transparency. Credibility is in the eye of the beholder.

This brings up the factor of sustaining wealth, even wealth abstractly denominated by a currency. Wealth is based on trust in currency which is in turn based on trust in the underlying asset values which support it. In modern societies — those with internationally tradable currencies — asset value has moved from a nominal dependence on gold to a dependence on other physical determinables. To a great degree, this was, for decades, based on the strength of the manufactures of primary and secondary industry, and also on the demand for — and therefore the “value” of — real estate. The leveraging of real estate as the basis for access to capital has become the basis of Western investment, taxation, and power.

It was this fundamental which was at the heart of the “global financial crisis” which began in about 2008: the attempt (leading to the crash) to build US real estate values rapidly and artificially²⁵; ie: outside of a real market. That bubble burst, and with it much of the ability to amass capital and move it globally. The result would become more evident over the second decade of the 21st Century, which would see more difficult multinational capital formation than in the late 20th Century; increasing nationalism and resultant bilateralism of trade funding; and so on.

But there are other trends which will help determine out-

25 Although, indeed, any aspect of the “value process” can be said to be an artificial or psychological construct.

comes over the coming decade, particularly the suddenness with which changing demographic patterns begin to bite. We can see, for example, the impact which the 2010 *La Niña* floods had in skewing the population dispersal patterns in Pakistan, the country with the highest level of population growth and the highest rate of urbanization. Now, the agricultural productivity of rural areas has been damaged by the flooding and more people have moved to the cities, substantially decreasing the *per capita* productivity there.

However, in most modern societies the peaking of population growth rates, and the move toward sudden population declines, will occur — as we discussed in the previous chapter — possibly within the coming decade or two. Population levels in a number of major nations are presently not sustainable by replacement births, and it may be that we begin to see areas gradually depopulate, reducing the demand for real estate, which has been the modern basis for wealth measurement and currency value. The last such major depopulation occurred with the great plague which followed the globalization of Genghis Khan in the 12th and 13th centuries, but at that time abstract value — such as portable wealth, expressed in currency — was not so dependent on real estate, and particularly highly-valued urban real estate.

So the world by 2020-30 could see a significant decline in the availability of capital (in real terms; the availability of printed, inflated money becomes less meaningful). Lack of a fluid market for urban real estate — because of a lowering of demand — would start to limit the options of urban dwellers. It would clearly start to limit the mobility of societies and their ability to access goods not produced within easy reach. All this will occur unless radical steps are taken to revive real productivity and the self-reliance of societies. And such radicalism is possible only through leadership.

It is that which we await.

Meanwhile, as we must next discuss, globalism — which many thought would change mankind's nature forever — proved not to be the panacea, or even reality, which many thought.

is *need* (often expressed as opportunity) which inspires technological innovation.

The failing condition of the modern iteration of globalization, only born with the end of the Cold War in 1990, had been evident for a few years before 2008. Globalization appeared as the hot, hard wind of that ebola-like virus: fast to come; faster to go. And, as in the silence of a stricken village after an ebola devastation, new life stirs, mirroring in its tentative emergence the generations of nature past. The brief, aberrant breeze of the open, global pattern is quickly lost. We, those who emerged from the earlier era and those born into the new, have begun to return unconsciously to human nature's proven old ways, but we have yet to re-learn them.

The new age — beyond the Age of Global Transformation now taking root — will reflect the patterns of species behavior since time immemorial: survival through adaptation. The first human reaction to structural collapse in societies, however, as we enter the chaos of transformation, is to cling to what remains of the past, and to make increasing sacrifices to old gods. We yearn for a familiar pattern, and we flock to those who promise the restoration of fathomable stability.

Thus, the first generation of leaders to capture the maelstrom populations of the transformation years is comprised of those who can speak eloquently, and point the finger of blame. It is easy, then, to see how, as people rally around leaders promising solutions and assigning blame, the world will begin to resume more nationalistic lines.

Some of the characteristics of the globalization era will, of necessity, begin to erode as economic uncertainty bites. Travel, imported acquisitions, and — consequentially — communications will to some degree shrink. Societies will need to rebuild local founts of food, manufactured goods,

and resources to avoid the cost, and dependence, of imported supplies. Internally, those societies which prosper will be those which become more balanced and more capable of creating internal solutions to local needs. But this, too, will engender greater isolationism within societies, and among sub-societies, and create more fear of outsiders.

Nationalism will be seen as necessary, too, as economic hardship in many areas begins to eat at living standards and healthcare quality. Societies will be vulnerable to epidemics and pandemics, some of which are already beginning to roil and bubble through refugee camps and shantytowns.

All of this presages the more rapid blunting of the already-slowing global population growth rate, but, at the same time, forces an increase in the impetus behind economic refugee movements. So, while overall population growth will slow — and begin to reverse by about 2035 or earlier — some states will still see refugee pressures on their borders. Economic pressures will produce growing resistance to, and declining sympathy for, these population shifts.

Worsening economic conditions, often married to declining currency values, will almost certainly cut into national security spending in many states, while social spending — a short-term palliative to voter distress — will rise. Growing government intervention in economies, as states begin taking stakes in, or command over, a declining community of private enterprises, will reduce longer-term economic flexibility and growth. It will also reduce scientific and technological innovation, deepening the global economic malaise. The utopian solutions promised by oratorical politicians will be short-lived because not only will the funds to sustain such largesse evaporate, but so, too, will public trust in the currency which is used to fund such circus wizardry. When trust collapses, then inflation, anger,

and desperation set in.

Societies will increasingly break into sub-units based on geography, ethnicity, language, or other commonality. The “multi-culturalism” which once was celebrated within states will create the fault lines around which desperation is expressed, and around which xenophobia erupts. That phenomenon was already in evidence by 2012. Governments will attempt to use increasingly draconian suppression to sustain unity, and many will resort to warfare to distract or channel their societies. As promised, the 21st Century will be more profound in its examples of cratocide, cratogenesis, and cratometamorphosis — the murder of states, birth of states, and the reorganization of states — than even the fecund 20th Century.

The major economies will need to rapidly re-build relatively self-sustaining internal supply and demand chains if they are to avoid importing problems over which they have no control. To be successful, market forces will need to be employed and taxes reduced; state spending does too little, too slowly. Regaining political control, in essence, will mean stressing nationalism, isolationism, and protectionism. This climate will provide the first major challenge to the viability of, for example, the European Union, and already by late January 2009 there were outbreaks of localized worker unrest in the EU in protest against imported workers from other parts of the EU. By 2012, the EU was deeply in crisis and economic malaise, and more firmly under the sway of Germany.

I wrote in 2009 that countries such as Australia would find it increasingly difficult to sustain their defense equipment acquisition programs. This, by 2012, was proving already to be the case, as it was in the US and UK, and other states. As with the last major defense capital program in Australia, in the late 1980s, contracted purchase agree-

ments may proceed, but much of the support services could well be cut, significantly impacting the ability of the armed forces to engage in sustained operations. At the same time, the threats which defense forces are expected to handle will grow for almost all societies, either from their own societies, from illegal immigration as the “information revolution” makes clear that opportunities abroad may be better than at home, and from xenophobic nationalism.

The People’s Republic of China and India have made confident claims about continued economic growth, but their growth — which was by 2011 already impressive by international standards — does not fully compensate for the internal dislocation, already underway in both societies (but particularly in India). Both will increasingly undertake sudden, reactive, short-term measures to address social or voter unrest caused by food and work shortages and the challenged agricultural land.

(And the agricultural evolution, needed globally because of the residual population surge of the next decade and because of the demands of urbanization, will itself become difficult because of declining availability of funds for science, development, and marketing, and because of the voodoo hysteria against genetic modification of crops. The chance of addressing and adapting to the real phenomenon of changing climate — given that climate is not a static phenomenon — will also be lost as urban societies, in particular, squander their economies on artificial and ultimately unproductive “carbon offset” schemes instead of agricultural and industrial productivity. Instead, we see “advanced” urban societies feverishly preoccupied with sacrificing all to the God of Climate Change, rather than adapting to cyclic changing climate.)

The short-term distractive or suppressive measures in which the PRC, India, and other societies must be expected

to engage — which are really and directly challenged by immediate social unrest due to food shortages and unemployment — will, almost axiomatically, be as destructive of long-term growth and stability as the short-term interventions which the governments of the “advanced industrial nations” are making in their own economies. It will be from these giant states, the PRC and India, as well as from Africa, the Middle East, South-East Asia, and Latin America, that the disenfranchised will seek to move to seemingly more attractive climes in the increasingly challenged economies of what we still call the “advanced industrial societies”.

Ultimately, with the reduction in social stimulation and market flexibility, societies will, in various ways, reach yet another watershed, and the last remnant images of the 20th Century, and the brief flirtation with “social democracy”, will be washed away. Leadership will increasingly become demagogic, swinging from left to right. “Democracy” in the 21st Century will be nothing like the democracy which was mythologized with fabianist utopianism in the 20th. New hierarchies will evolve around new national identities. The lure of secessionism of societies within existing states will seem irresistible to many social sub-groups, and the chances which existed during the post-Cold War era to build viable, integrated societies — unified modern nation-states in a positive sense — will have been lost.

Change in the 21st Century will be profound, even though the fundamentals of sovereignty and power will remain as they always have. For a period, most existing nation-states will continue to focus around the major cities. The US may initially move, as did Rome, into “Eastern” and “Western” empires, or fragment still more; the Federation — given present trends — seems likely to become less cohesive, and to begin to reduce, once again, more to a confederation. Major advances in science and technology may slow

significantly, because of the inability to bring together capital and intellectual resources on the scale made possible during the 20th Century. More basic societies of smaller size than today's nation-states will almost certainly re-assert themselves on the basis of sustainability at lower levels of prosperity than today, and therefore with lower overall levels of education, research, and industry.

But, for all this, modern societies remain a great enterprise; a beast which needs to be fed. Today, more than at any time in history, and because of urbanization, what is needed to sustain the feeding process is energy to fuel tools.

XIV

“Urban Man” is Now “Energy Man”

WHAT DOES IT SAY OF MODERN CIVILIZATION that we spend more of our time and investment acquiring the energy for our tools than we spend on the tools themselves, and on the uses for which the tools were created? It is a symptom of the switch in the West to a process-orientation from a progress-driven civilization. It is *the tools and their purpose* which are the measures of progress, not the fuels which power them. We have become prisoners to the process; we are now defined by the fuel we consume to survive.

Everything about our lives is governed now by our reliance on electrical energy. This was not so until recently. Our use of all forms of energy tied us, until the 20th Century, fairly directly to nature: we used wood or coal for our fires — for heating and cooking — and animal-origin oils or tallow for candlelight, gradually supplemented by gaslight and kerosene.

We could look, with a new irony by the late 20th Century, at our transformation into electrically-dependent homes (and therefore petroleum-, gas-, coal-fired and nuclear-generated electricity) as we thought of Winston Churchill’s words in his October 28, 1943, speech about rebuilding the British House of Commons. It had been badly mauled by Hitler’s *blitz*. Churchill noted: “We shape our buildings,

and afterwards our buildings shape us.”

That was certainly true culturally and ethically in making the case for the need to rebuild the House of Commons for Britain and Western concepts of democracy. Indeed, we think of the House of Commons (as part of the iconic Houses of Parliament in Westminster) as an ancient symbol of Western-style democracy: the “Mother of Parliaments”. But the *form* we know today of the Houses of Parliament (which embody the ancient meeting rooms, with remnants of the Palace of Westminster pre-dating the 1066 Conquest by the Normans) was only 109-years-old when Churchill made his 1943 speech. The structure had been mostly destroyed in an 1834 fire, and was rebuilt to a new design, construction of which completed in 1870.

And yet the building shapes us intellectually, emotionally. Then, that building — and almost all others — began to overwhelmingly shape us in other ways. We became unable to live in urban buildings without electricity. Today, because of our energy dependence pattern, we are not merely shaped by our buildings, we are prisoners of them. We may be culturally inspired by the loftiness of the architecture which we create, and which reflects our grandeur of thought down the centuries, but we are now ourselves wired inextricably into the structures.

Indeed, no political or economic power exists even for a moment in today’s world without the spark provided by electrical power and therefore the raw materials which create that current. Almost all modern tools have incorporated some form of energy “life” to make them more productive than the tools they replaced. At the very least, many of the tools today which do *not* require electrical or other forms of non-human power to function nonetheless require electrical and non-human power in their creation.

The movement of the global majority of peoples into ur-

ban life has pushed the rôle of energy into a totally new era. The transformation of the rôle of energy in our lives has until now been evolutionary. By the beginning of the 21st Century the transformation had become revolutionary. And yet, almost no-one noticed.

The massive move of human populations into great urban centers has ensured that energy has now become literally a *component*, an *organ*, of the human being in modern society. Energy dependence/capability — now a fundamental trait of modern human logic and survival — is what separates “modern societies” from “traditional societies”. Energy has become integrated into the modern human, as much a part of *belief* systems as other social belief systems are in traditional societies.

As this reality of energy-enabled urbanization evolves — as I hope to explain — we are also aware that “the chaos of change” has been encroaching on an almost global scale. Certainly, we have not shrunk from it in our discussions in these pages, but rather see it not as “chaotic change”; merely a new phase of human social response to its context and condition. But the knowledge that the present and anticipated levels of change was coming — particularly in “modern” or Westphalian forms of society — does not sufficiently prepare most institutions of state for that change. Societies and their institutions change gradually, almost imperceptibly. That is the way we prefer it. Sudden change creates stress, and only a minority of people thrive in such conditions.

The great British constitutionalists, J. R. Tanner and Walter Bagehot, agreed that the “existence of the Crown serves to disguise change and therefore deprive it of the evil consequences of revolution”. We are now in a transitional period in which the success or survival of existing modern societies will be defined by “change disguised as *status quo*”, and

failure will be marked by sudden (although not necessarily unforeseeable) and disruptive events.

Apart from the overall transformations in social structures occurring as a result of massive urbanization, including the viability of various forms of governance, what has been perhaps most significant has been the gradual evolution of the global energy environment. We have witnessed perhaps 10 millennia of human dependence on external forms of energy (more, of course, if we count the reality that food is the fundamental form of human energy). In a report in June 2008, I noted: “The immediate and direct strategic linkages between energy, food, water, social stability, and strategic power are now more profound and global than ever before, thanks to emerging technology and the globalization of markets and trends.” We have witnessed the evolution of energy markets and technologies — such as the transforming uranium and thorium reactor prospects — over the past decade. We have seen the sudden surge in Eurasian (and for that matter, to a degree, African) oil and gas pipelines resembling the evolution of synaptic links in a growing human brain. The Eurasian Continent’s pipeline and powerline linkages, coupled with fossil-fuel-powered land, sea, and air infrastructural growth, are spreading like a visible flood from the Pacific to the Atlantic.

The entire fabric of Continental Eurasian society, linking East Asia with the Atlantic-Mediterranean European states, is beginning to feed from that interactive arterial energy/logistical system. In geographic scope, this is unrivaled. In terms of systems complexity and human integration, it will move in the same direction as the compactly interdependent energy-social system in the North-Eastern North American Continent. There, increasingly, it is becoming impossible to separate out “energy” — the electrical carrier

force — from the computing and communications interactivity which literally enables society to function.

In technologically advanced societies — modern societies — the removal of “energy” is the removal of mobility, communications, food and water production and movement, manufacturing, and human and product mobility. Interference with any aspect of the neural network of energy/communications/computerization renders the society helpless. Large urban gatherings of people (and the world’s population is now preponderantly urban) cease to be viable within days, or at best weeks, of a sustained interruption of electric impulses; even the delivery of combustible fuels for mobility are now dependent on this interactive network. On the other hand, modern life, as it has developed over the past 120 years, is feasible because of this patchwork evolution of interactive networks. It is modern society’s greatest strength *and its greatest vulnerability*, given the potential for sudden, sharp, and catastrophic interruption.

The reality now is that, in the past decade of this staggeringly rapid transformation of human society — 120 or so years out of some six-million years of modern mankind — the cementing of the energy/communications/computerization matrix into human viability has rendered meaningless a focus merely on the raw components of energy. In other words, just as the “bronze age” was not about bronze itself, but about what bronze implements could achieve, so the ages of iron, coal, and petroleum have passed astern of us. We are in an integrative phase in which bronze, and iron, and coal, and petroleum — and whatever else — are now but old building blocks, not important for themselves, but merely representing the fact that such a material substance represents the *kind* of tool needed to achieve the outcome required of human society.

The world, of course, is not uniform, so there are profound exceptions which we must consider. Africa, for example (although Africa is itself far from uniform as a strategic zone), is urbanizing its societies at a rapid rate. However, as of 2012, its societies lay heavily outside the “energy matrix”. Some 75 percent of the Continent’s population was estimated to be still living apart from the main electrical grids. This, in many respects, makes African societies — with some notable modern city exceptions — less vulnerable, and therefore also less efficient, than most major, modern urban societies elsewhere in the world. Other pockets of the world mirror Africa to some degree, and while these less electrified societies have “less distance to fall”, they also can sustain themselves more easily than the great urban societies of the modern world.

My colleague and friend, Andrew Pickford, who runs the Indo-Pacific arm of the International Strategic Studies Association from Perth, Western Australia, spends most of his time worrying about the link between the stability of power supplies and the stability of societies. He noted: “Changes to the cost and availability of electricity supply — as well as gasoline supplies — in almost any nation (developed or developing) is met with immediate, and sometimes violent, response. This is akin to a Roman emperor restricting the granting of bread or circuses. [We saw the violent response of Nigerians in 2012 when the Government attempted to withdraw the State subsidy on gasoline; the Government had to retreat from that position.]

A restless population will punish, either physically or at the voting box, any leader who impinges on the ‘right’ to cheap and virtually limitless electricity or fuel. In developed countries, some governments have been punished for a blackout lasting a few hours. Realizing that electricity supply has different time sensitivities — such as on a swel-

tering day when air conditioners are running, or during a national sporting event when televisions are on — disrupting electricity can have a disproportionate psychological impact on a target population. It is certain that nations with offensive cyber warfare capabilities are considering attacks based on these insights.”

He added: “Resilient societies in times of major international upheaval will find that localized, and not-networked, electricity solutions will be a source of strength. While North Korea, lightly-populated parts of Africa or remote Australia may seem hostile and desolate now, in times of major crisis they may be the first to build basic electricity systems, and be able to shift and desalinate and purify water. Urban centers would be the first to be deserted, and even smaller regional towns would be unlivable if continuous attacks on electricity grids caused them to become dysfunctional.”

“As in other periods of history, depopulation and chaos happen quickly when key infrastructure is stressed, and then fails. We are actually more exposed to rapid societal collapse now than in the past. After the next major blackout or first cyber sabotage of a grid affecting large numbers of citizens, a shift to expanded homeland crisis/rescue capabilities for the power network — and associated abilities to supply pure water — will occur. Like the response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US, this shift of defensive capabilities will be disproportionate, poorly targeted, and will simply confirm the attractiveness to an enemy of attacks on the power grid.”

Of course, urban societies’ dependence on energy is complex. In a report in 2010, I wrote that the “age of gas” had begun in earnest, to indicate that gas as a fossil fuel was about to become a major energy component to rival (and perhaps dwarf) petroleum, but it was not meant that mod-

ern society was moving from “the petroleum age” to “the gas age”, because petroleum, gas, nuclear power, and so on, are now merely alternate tools in the delivery of desired outcomes.

This gets us to the point.

The *outcome* we desire is not oil, or gas, or uranium; neither even access to these commodities, nor even to electricity itself. The *outcome* we desire is societal, and even species, survival and the dominance of our own group or society (ie: freedom from becoming secondary considerations, or “also-rans”). We are so embroiled in the *process* of survival or life that we often forget the outcome we desire, which is life itself.

As we discussed earlier: *Preoccupation with process and means is tactical; preoccupation with outcomes and future context is strategic.* With regard to energy, we can already see that sustaining and protecting the neural networks of interactive electricity/communications/computerization is a priority with direct impact on the non-negotiable strategic goal of societal survival. How this end is achieved is a tactical process. Admittedly large-scale tactics: “grand tactics”, if you will.

Commodities and products are tactical; what is done with them determines strategic outcomes. Oil, gas, internal combustion engines, semaphore flags, the theory of relativity: all were building blocks helping to define “victory” (ie: the desired outcome) at a certain stage. It is essential, therefore, to focus on outcomes, and to be aware of the vulnerabilities (as well as possibilities) which our accretion of tool-building has given.

In this, perhaps it is possible to proffer one more maxim: *All steps forward are based on vision; all steps backward are based on budget.*

Our “total man” constitution of human/electrical/com-

munications/computerization is delicately balanced. As a result, in this time of global transformation, an absence of vision could rapidly reduce the welfare of humankind, and even threaten the survival of large parts of it.

Energy, of course, particularly in this integrated context of “urban man”, offers particular vulnerabilities to disruption, both natural and man-made. In this light, future warfare could become so dramatically more costly in the 21st Century than the World Wars of the 20th, largely because the casualties could very easily be in the urban civilian populations. The kinetic aspects of warfare — as the Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns proved in the 2003-2012 time-frame — will mainly be of a non-nuclear, non-conventional nature, with substantially less loss of life than the World Wars.

But in the 21st Century we will almost certainly see massive casualties resulting from rear area (ie: homeland) “denial of service” attacks which utilize cyber warfare to cut off large areas of urban landscape from electricity — and therefore from computer access and communications — for extended periods. This we will discuss further in Chapter XVIII: “The Future of Warfare”.

The confluences, then, of urbanization and its energy heartbeat, and transformed warfare, will make the 21st Century conflict scene diffuse, complex, and difficult to manage. It takes the “total war”, which strategist Stefan Possony described so eloquently in 1938, to an even more dramatic level. My scientist friend — and former astronaut — Dr Paul Scully-Power, took my model of the confluence of great strategic trends and put it in mathematical terms: “The world has suddenly gone non-linear. This is a specific mathematical term, and non-linear mathematics is still in its infancy. Nevertheless, we know enough to understand that there are sudden ‘phase changes’ in a non-linear sys-

tem (together with some very unexpected synchronicities) which seem to mirror world events. I also believe that these mathematical concepts can be applied to the cyber world to predict hidden vulnerabilities which we are just beginning to see exposed on a daily basis. The same mathematics can, I believe, be used to model the electricity grids, which display various aspects of self-synchronicity.”

Paul, an Australian-born oceanographer and scientist who flew on the Space Shuttle in 1984, further noted: “Chaos is not random: there are inherent structures embedded in it, although such structures are ‘non-linear’ and often counter-intuitive. That is why the oceans spawn spiral eddies, which are (after some guy flew in space) now known to be ubiquitous.” Paul was, and still is, that “some guy”.

He continued: “Indeed, spiral eddies are a manifestation of nature’s non-linear structure. When nature detects a buildup of energy, it allows a linear growth (small currents become large currents) but then there occurs what I call a non-linear phase change: nature spins off excess energy from large currents in the form of eddies. This has two effects: (a) it prevents chaos, and (b) it stabilizes the underlying structure (currents) which was becoming unstable. And these phase-changes occur almost instantaneously, which is what we see in global (unstable) affairs.”

“Moreover, there are precursors which you can see if you know what to look for: as a current grows in strength, it starts to meander (if you think about it, that is natural: the path length becomes longer so it can contain more energy), it forms more and more meanders (loops), and eventually these loops pinch off as eddies extracting large amounts of energy from the current system.”

“And these eddies are themselves very stable entities with a long lifetime.”

“So perhaps my eddies are your new stable forms of government across the world, and they are the end product of the instabilities which are now all around us globally. The global current is becoming unstable, not least because of the increased energy which is being put into the system by the Internet and social media.”

“So what we will see eventually are self-contained pockets of stability (eddies) globally which have a distinctly different structure from that which we are accustomed to, together with a much-reduced (less energy) old system (currents).”

He added: “Whilst nature abhors a vacuum, at the other end of the scale nature also abhors chaos. Nature will always find a new stable or quasi-stable structure in order to spin off energy and thus prevent chaos. Indeed that is probably why the universe has black holes: they clean up the (otherwise) chaos.”

Is it possible, then, that complex non-linear systems work in the opposite direction: that of decreasing entropy (randomness)? Starting at the very small, everything is very diverse (every entity is different), and they are therefore random inputs. Then they learn to act/react to certain very simple rules and thereby form some “clumpiness” (very similar to the universe right after the Big Bang). This “organization”, in fact, reduces entropy. The clumps then interact (nodes talking to nodes); the “network” expands, and there are more “learned” rules applied. This in turn reduces further the entropy of the non-linear system. Finally the system “self-organizes” thereby reducing entropy even further. So the real question is to determine which trend wins: the trend to greater entropy (everything becomes more random), *versus* this trend toward less entropy in complex systems? Does this give insight as to where we are headed? It is captured in the reality that we must often accept local

randomness as part of an architecture which nonetheless sees global stability.

As Paul Scully-Power points out, we see this in the swarming of insects, the schooling of fish, the flocking of birds, and the herding of animals. Recent simulations have shown that increasing the region of “awareness” of single entities in a group leads to “phase changes”, whereby groups instantaneously change from random movement to locally-organized movement, and then to all of the individuals moving in the same direction.

This is typical of non-linear systems and can serve to explain why some fads take hold, why crowds react as they do, and perhaps gives better understanding of the sudden changes in group dynamics, such as the so-called “Arab Spring” of 2011 (and into 2012), which had diverse origins in diverse cultures, but yet harmonized with the appearance (but not the reality) of spontaneity and common purpose. It also carries with it a lesson on the robustness and resilience of complex systems, namely that stressing a system can often lead to a better organized, and hence a more resilient system. A classic example of this is the constant stressing of *HizbAllah* by the Israelis which has only served to make that network more robust. The group learned to swarm at incursion points; very similar to how the body’s immune system works. *HizbAllah* — as just one example — learned to be resilient by responding to external stresses placed on the system. And it is only a resilient system which is able to adapt to change and uncertainty in a complex world.

It should not surprise us then that we should be able to view the devastation — and disaster relief efforts — following the Japanese *tsunami* of April 2011, and the subsequent collapse of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, as merely a weekend exercise in the kind of disaster which can

be expected to result from major future warfare in our current strategic climate. Or even from the natural disasters which can occur in urban areas, particularly, from a severe dislocation of electrical power supply.

We are part of the great river trends of human and natural history, and now we are seeing the effect of the confluence of these great rivers, or great currents and eddies. They create great change, but not necessarily long-term instabilities.

They merely re-order and re-shape the architecture of human societies.

XV

Heartlands, Rimlands, and Oceans: a New Age

THE GEOPOLITICS OF URBANIZATION is not something which will *possibly* occur in the future. It has *already* had a profound impact on the changing architecture of the world's peoples, particularly over the past two centuries. Energy demands of the great urban societies have driven the speed with which this new shape has begun to achieve cohesion.

The world has now been divided into “the great heartland” of the Eurasian continent, and “the great oceans”, which remain essentially Western, but which are increasingly contested. It is time, then, to look with new eyes at the great teachings of Rear Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan²⁶ and others (such as Theodore Roosevelt) on sea power; Sir Halford Mackinder²⁷ on heartland theories; Stefan T. Possony on air power; and Alexis de Tocqueville on great power development²⁸. The principles of these thinkers remain valid, but we need to view them through the new

26 Particularly his most popular work, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660–1783* (written in 1890), but also other writings.

27 Particularly Sir Halford's *The Geographical Pivot of History* (1904), which articulated heartland theory, and several other books including *Britain and the British Seas* (1902).

28 See, Possony, Stefan T.: *Strategic Air Power for Dynamic Security*, Washington, DC, 1949; The Infantry Journal Press. Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) covered, in his *Democracy in America* (*De la démocratie en Amérique*) (1835, 1840), the inherent differences between Russia's approaches to expansion and the approaches of the United States of America, and foresaw the great power competition between Russia and the US.

prism of population growth and urbanization, as well as considering the dynamic impact of emerging population decline.

We may look back and see 2010 as the year in which the new geopolitical shape of the world became more clear.

By 2012, the six decades of Western aerial — or air power — dominance was essentially over. This is something which — like the loss of maritime dominance — is not necessarily evidenced, initially, by the loss of combat engagements. Where the balance is changed is in the constraints which *the knowledge of limitations ensures* on the projection of power, making the decline of influence inevitable.

This does not imply that Western technologies or economic leadership in the projection of strategic air and maritime capabilities have necessarily been lost, only that the West is not now guaranteed of unchallenged supremacy in the air or on the seas.

Mackinder saw how the Russian Empire, by the early 20th Century, had brought under its dominance or influence much of Central Asia and Eastern Europe, excluding Western Europe, India, and East Asia (China and Korea, for example). Today, we see a trading and strategic pattern embracing the *entire* Eurasian continent. This is more of a mosaic of interests than a map of hegemonic clarity. It is a mosaic in the form of a cauldron of differing interests and competition, but it has nonetheless finally achieved a continental shape and interdependence which have never before been visible on this scale of completeness.

What is significant is that this over-arching “heartland” shape — including, as I noted, many contradictions and competitions — firmly isolates some of the maritime extremities, such as India, the United Kingdom, and Japan. The interests of the heartland are increasingly separate from, and sometimes competitive with, the Atlantic/Pacific

powers: the US, Canada, Australia, the UK, and so on. These two emerging *blocs* are not necessarily mutually hostile, but they have divergent interests, perspectives, and destinies.

By 2010, the relative strategic fortunes of the maritime powers — essentially the Anglosphere and Japan — were declining in direct proportion to the rise of the Eurasian collective. The maritime powers are foundering upon a malaise of leaderlessness and hubris: it is *that* which is hindering the retention of their wealth and power. The heartland states are stumbling with inefficiency and petty suspicions toward their economic and strategic growth: it is that *dysfunction* which hinders — and may undermine — the evolution of the great Eurasian integration.

The new Great Silk Route is the spinal cord of the emerging Eurasian heartland trading and structural entity. The Great Silk Sea Route, linking the Pacific to the Atlantic through the Indian Ocean, is still outside the grasp of the heartland, and control of this remains with the maritime powers, at least for the time being.

I have said before that the People's Republic of China's sway over the Pakistan landbridge, which links the PRC with the Indian Ocean, constrains India to look seaward. India cannot effectively look to the Central Asian hinterland as long as it cannot build an overland link through Pakistan to Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, into the Eurasian trading pattern of the revived Great Silk Route. Thus the PRC ensures that India cannot look landward, while Beijing insists that it will build a navy to challenge India — and the maritime West — at sea.

We have witnessed the declining ability of India, despite its significant economic growth in recent years, to compete strategically with the PRC. [The PRC, with a 2011 est. GDP of \$7.298-trillion, ranked second among sovereign states in

terms of GDP levels, while India, with an est. 2011 GDP of \$1.848-trillion, ranked 10th²⁹; the actual gap between the relative strength of the two states increased substantially over the preceding decade.] Thus, India can only compete strategically with the PRC as a trading and maritime state, and diplomatically; not as a continental power.

India, if it cannot wrest Pakistan from the PRC's implicit protection, or see Pakistan disintegrate through internal implosion, must, perforce ally itself with the Western maritime nations. At the same time, it must attempt to win back friendship — this time on an equal basis — with Russia, at China's rear.

The PRC, meanwhile, has become the hidden force projecting into Europe, and into the Mediterranean and Persian Gulf, while Russia — itself also geographically only an indirect Mediterranean power — projects itself there more openly.

The relative clarity with which the great geopolitical *blocs* are emerging — between the heartland and the maritime states — suggests that the Western European states, because of their dependence on Russia and Central Asia for energy and trade, must look more to the East, and less to the Atlantic. Britain, then, is now, again, a maritime state, even though it has denuded itself of the maritime power, comprehensive manufacturing, and trading basis which was its strength. British conservatives had rightly looked askance at the suggestion that the UK was a “European state” in the same sense, and outlook, as the Continental nations.

The Republic of Korea, slightly separated from the Eurasian heartland by the land blockage which North Korea (DPRK) represents, is torn between being a Eurasian power, or a maritime power. It tends toward the latter, and, as such, must continue to rebuild its strategic links with Ja-

29 As estimated by the World Bank ranking of gross domestic products (GDPs).

pan, the North American leaders (US and Canada), Australia, India, Indonesia, Britain, and so on. Most significantly, the Republic of China (ROC: Taiwan) must henceforth regard itself as a major island maritime trading nation. Taipei must seriously reconsider its commitment of some 80 percent of its defense spending to a static army. The ROC Army was designed as a continental army and maintained to “return to the mainland”. Later, in static mode, it was to defend against a PRC amphibious assault. Now, the ROC must commit more to maritime and air power. Unless it does so, and finds ways to build discreet relations with the maritime powers, it will become strategically meaningless within a decade or so.

Australia, now the third largest foreign investor nation in the world, looks to the PRC as the major source of export earnings, a factor which compromises its strategic self-perception. The US Clinton and Obama administrations sold their souls to the PRC to get cheap material goods for the US public, destroying much of the US industrial base in the process. Now, the relative decline in the US dollar could well make revived US entrepreneurship affordable, if only the US Government would cease to punish investment in US industry, and unleash the US private sector again. At the time of writing in 2012, under the Obama Administration, this was not happening.

So, the great strategic realignment is now emerging. By 2012, the US had a partial recognition of this, and began to abandon Atlanticism — as we will discuss in a later chapter — and turn toward Asia and the Pacific. At the same time, the German-led Continental European states pivoted Eastward, also turning toward Asia. The Atlantic Ocean was becoming, strategically, the *oblitus mare*: the forgotten sea. With this, the fate of the North Atlantic Alliance drifts into question.

The fundamental change in global strategic architecture is recognized in Eurasia, but not yet in the same way by the maritime states. For the maritime states, it must be a time of revived sea and air power if they are not to be strategically — as well as geographically — peripheral.

XVI

As the World Changes: Cæsarism by Stealth

S*IC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI:* Thus passes the glory of the world. As with matter, however, glory and power do not disappear; they merely transform and move to new owners. But there is no doubt that the global human structure of societies is undergoing cratometamorphosis: total re-organization, re-shaping, transformation.

It is time for all societies to consider their goals and priorities.

There are those who, in comfort and wealth, remain in denial that the global transformation is occurring, and that they are already no longer the élite of the world. There are those who yearn for the prestige and identity of leadership, and the rewards of wealth. There are those loyal allies of the fading great powers who equally refuse to accept that they have now been thrust alone into the world, like a reluctant youth accustomed to the firm guidelines of parents.

And there are those who, seeing their societies in decline, scent challenge in the air, and prepare to re-invent their states. It has been done before.

Few epochs in human history have seen a society rise to absolute pre-eminence and then enter structural decline as quickly as the United States of America. But then, the pace of all human social development has been accelerated in that half-century or so of US dominance. Indeed, it was that

same period of wealth increase and the brief flash of globalization which caused human society to grow dramatically in numbers and then accelerate the migration into urban areas. Arguably, it was this urbanization — the culmination and expression of wealth and expectation — which caused the US and the West in general to lose its balance between rural, agricultural society on the one hand, and industrialization, and urbanized service sectors on the other.

We have discussed all this before. The question now is: Where, then, do we go from here?

The global empires of Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Britain, and others slid quietly into comfortable decline in terms of global relative power and control over their own destinies. There were other societies which we now forget were once challengers for dominance — such as Argentina at the turn of the 20th Century — which have slipped into a slumber of low achievement, often with nightmares. For others, the choking sclerosis of terminal decline triggers responses to clear the arteries of the accumulated detritus. So it was with Rome.

Republican Rome's pre-eminence became riven and pre-occupied with internal and counter-productive power struggles, until Julius Cæsar militarily — with the crossing of the Rubicon river — swept away the centuries of growing customs, rights, and expectations of its citizens. It was this "Cæsarism" which led Rome to its ultimate re-birth and glory with the Empire. Indeed, throughout the West, accumulated expectations and "entitlements" of the citizenry — including the right, through what has been termed democracy, to vote, to be able to demand those entitlements — cannot now be removed except by the act of a Cæsar or a Bonaparte, or through the catharsis of a military defeat.

Western societies can either accept a slide into secondary and dependent status to the new global powers — with the

consequent decline in living standards and wealth — or they can embrace the sudden upheaval which attends the arrival of a demagogue who sweeps away all impediments, including the voting and attendant trough-swilling of citizens. In most cases, societies become desperate and embrace the Cæsar or Bonaparte, willingly sacrificing liberties to the political correctness of the mob. Elias Canetti (*Crowds and Power*), and Gustave Le Bon (*The Crowd*) highlighted this. Niccolò Machiavelli (*The Prince*, etc.) and others confirmed *how* the transition could be managed. Certainly, Oswald Spengler (*The Decline of the West*) anticipated the issue.

In much of the West, however, the new Cæsars will arise with stealth and open palms. Adolf Hitler, to an extent, did so, creating (after a series of mis-steps) a popular militancy which saw him able to manipulate the electoral process to gain initial legitimacy as Chancellor of Germany in 1933, rapidly transforming that into the position of absolute leader. First, in 1934, he combined the offices of President and Chancellor, having already ensured that his Nationalist Socialist party could govern alone, with all powers stripped from the *Reichstag*. When President Field Marshal Paul von Hindenberg died, less than two years after Hitler's accession as Chancellor, Hitler in August 1934 assumed absolute dictatorial power as *Führer*.

Hitler's rise and the speed of change were dramatic, even in the 1930s which lacked the transformative communications and computerization of the early 21st Century. So, too, were the gale-force winds which swept Julius Cæsar and Napoleon Bonaparte to power. These are not abstract comparisons. The rapidity of the decline of US power within just two years from 2009 showed how quick is the process of transformation, albeit — as with Rome, and France, and Germany — fed by decades of incremental

steps toward the edge of the precipice.

Unique, however, in the modern era — the past few hundred years, shall we say — is the fact that global human society is now also moving toward a patchwork process of decline in overall human population numbers, within a couple of decades or so. This will dramatically affect economic patterns, in ways which are as yet difficult to ascertain. The population declines will vary from area to area, and for a variety of reasons, as we have discussed earlier.

All of this will determine how societies — and secondarily, states — plan for their futures. One of the few things which *is* clear, however, is that those societies which succeed will be those which focus on rebuilding balance in their structures, to ensure that they assert control over their supplies of food, water, energy, production, and territory. Any continued attempt to rely on foreign “outsourcing” — dependence — for food, manufactures, and energy will create vulnerabilities which will automatically render a society or state vulnerable.

XVII

Thus Changes Empire, thus Democracy

WE CLING LIKE FRIGHTENED CHILDREN to the past. We long for one last glimpse of our departed father, or mother, or loved one. In their last days we hang on to them, and beg them not to leave. Yet we know that they are going, and understand when they have gone.

We strive to hold their vision in our heart and mind, and to honor their values, their teachings, their way of life.

We find ourselves in, and define ourselves by, the cloak of those who nurtured us. It embeds the lessons of our past.

We know that all things drift astern of us, as we ourselves will one day exist only in the minds of others — if we are fortunate — as benign and blurred memories of the lives we have led. We think back on the passing of our great families, our great societies, our great empires, and of the philosophies which each — at the zenith of its life — felt unsurpassable; invincible in its purity of concept. And yet all passes, and has been surpassed.

The success of each form of life is that it usually progresses in evolutionary steps. It sometimes perishes or distorts, however, in revolutionary occurrences. But change occurs inexorably, and, in the evolution, it is gradually embraced as familiar. What was once familiar to our forebears is recalled or perceived either in idealized images, or as increasingly distant from, and unimportant to, our lives.

We saw, in the 20th Century, empires transform and societies change. We saw new and supposedly perfect forms of social ideology emerge and disappear. Yet each of us holds a model of a society in our mind and view it as complete and perfect. To others, in another place, our view is imperfect; and in another time what today we hold perfect will later appear naïve. It is for these abstract thoughts, which in another place or time will be dismissed, that we often fight or die, largely because these concepts enable us — in *our* place and time — to prosper and survive. But we must see, if we are to think beyond reaction, that what we have today can and will evolve and transform.

Our present concepts of democracy — the way in which individuals trade rights and duties to achieve collective action and therefore collective security and prosperity — vary within our own society and between societies. We have long since taken for granted how we surrender some rights (such as our earnings) to trade with others (municipal departments, for example) to collect garbage, or to provide water and power. Our means of creating greater collectives of societies — a society of societies: an empire — evolve in scope and complexity according to needs and aspirations.

Most people prefer to trade freedoms and prosperity for stability and certainty — security — and it is this trait which actually permits the survival of societies and the perpetuation of the species. It is the same instinct which sees the large growths and declines in other species, such as the lemming which we discussed earlier. But this desire of the majority to opt for the curtailment of freedom and prosperity in exchange for the security of survival gives great advantage to those individuals who are prepared, or happy, to tolerate a large measure of uncertainty and instability to *gain* freedom and prosperity.

These are the leaders. And what I hoped to demonstrate

in *The Art of Victory* was that true leadership absolutely necessitates the separation of a leader from those who are led. As an individual progresses up the chain of leadership, he or she must, to be successful, increasingly become distanced from the led. The leader, in fact, must thrive on the ability to make decisions alone, and to have confidence in those decisions. True leaders also acquire power and influence by the nature of their actions, and by their willingness to take steps which daunt the majority, who fear to break with the safety of the crowd.

The 18th and 19th centuries saw a formal and reasonably rigid structuring of hierarchies of societies — empires — which acknowledged a supreme commanding society. Some of those 18th and 19th century empires were led as a result of the mature evolution of highly-structured hierarchies: monarchies and stable elected governments. Others were the product of revolution and the mobs, which threw up charismatic, decisive, and often ruthless individual leaders, such as Napoleon I, Napoleon Bonaparte. But in that period, the technology, education levels, and social patterns were such that the empires required a rigid adherence to structure, and to some extent minimized freedom of action by component societies within those empires.

The 20th Century saw a modification of that, as component societies (colonies, for the most part) in an empire of societies each gained in self-sufficiency, confidence, and need. Thus empires gradually transformed — relaxed — into confederal collectives such as grand alliances and commonwealths, or morphed in some instances into super-states.

Just as the concept of democracy adapts to time and place, so, too, does the concept of empire.

As “democracy” in many advanced Western states becomes intractably complex and unproductive, we see else-

where that “democracies” begin their lives with rudimentary and simplistic views of governance as they break from their own social frameworks. Our mistake is to evaluate other expressions of democracy from the perspective of the framework which *we* find desirable, and then to judge how other societies should and do transform.

All attempts to proselytize an ideology ultimately face rejection, transformation, or confrontation. Pride in our own superiority and enlightenment cannot — as history shows — resist the urge to proselytize. Again, it is worth turning to philosopher Elias Canetti, who grasped this in his descriptions, in *Crowds and Power*, of why and how societies attempt to bring in new converts and members as a means of reinvigorating their bloodlines, their security, and their wealth. Perhaps the question which we must ask ourselves is how is it most practicable to build “our crowd”? When is enough enough? When do we assert the dominance of our bloodline or belief over others? When do we allow others to assert dominance over us?

However we answer that, it must be realized that the human imperative to build societies on the basis of a trading of individual rights for collective good, and how we build empires, will continue, but merely transform in its *manner*.

As we see from the sclerosis of Western democracies in 2012 and the nascent concurrent expressions of new societies elsewhere in the world, there will be no uniform approach to global transformation. We saw the transformation of the 18th, 19th, and 20th century empires from rigid to accommodating, yet we see remnants of the Mongolian empire of Genghis Khan still evident down the skeletal remains of the Moghuls and the Korean dynasties; indeed, we still see remnants of the earlier empire of Chin. Even in the shapes of European regions invaded by the Mongols (and also by the Turkic peoples). And we see the remnants of Ro-

man, Persian, Macedonian, and other empires linger in the 21st Century DNA.

So, by the mid-21st Century we will see still these ancient shadows, but in new forms. The question is not *how* the West can cling to its visions of what society is, or was, because these visions are *already* mere reflections of something which no longer exists. Nostalgia is not a vision of the future; it is a dream of the past through today's prism.

And yet all viable societies retain the same principles through eternity: the ability to harmoniously and efficiently trade individual rights for collective effort and security; and the ability to control absolutely the means of human survival (food, water, protection from the elements, protection from the assault of hostile forces or factors, the materials to build tools and to ensure wellbeing), including the geography on which to live and produce. As wealth and needs grow, societies must seek durable alliances with other societies to trade and seek mutual shelter. Thus are built treaties and empires.

What emerged by the early 21st Century was that some great societies forgot these principles, and surrendered control of essential resources, and even alienated treaty partners (members of the empire) vital to common action. Winning back the great global alliances, and even rebuilding societies into a viable format of traded duties will require a different paradigm than the democratic structures which we saw, very briefly, working in the 20th Century.

We cannot be wedded to frozen views of ideologies and parties and electoral structures which should, in fact, evolve. Otherwise we — as societies — will perish with the mighty systems which lie beneath the Giza Plateau.

If this seems fundamental, then we must also recognize that societies cannot safely cling to antique views as to how nations wage war. It is true that generals and societies tend

to plan for the next war on the basis of the last, but — with global society changing so tectonically — that would be an unwise path to pursue moving into the 21st Century.

XVIII

The Future of Warfare

*Why some of the next important conflicts
will center on our cities, but be fought in the
countrysides*

GR EAT MILITARY POWERS MUST NOW consider the watershed nature of transformations in how warfare is likely to be fought in the future. Warfare changes constantly, as society and technology evolve, but the 20th Century saw military thinkers view change predominantly in physical, technological terms. They were not wrong: technological evolution was the hallmark of this extrapolation of the industrial revolution. But that perception was incomplete.

Significantly, the technological evolution led doctrinal change in warfare, often by default. In other words, new technologies — from breech-loading weapons, to aviation, to electronic communications, and so on — forced, or allowed, tacticians and strategists to evolve how they prosecuted warfare. It was, for example, the great failure of doctrinal development to catch up with the technological capabilities of new weapons which caused the massive casualties of the US Civil War (1860-65) and, to an extent, the Great War of 1914-18.

But the 21st Century has already shown that it is now *the social context* which dominates the paradigm shift in the way the next age of armed conflict will emerge. Indeed, this

was also the case as the world's societies — their social and political construct — in the 1930s created the shape of how World War II would be fought³⁰. And now, again, in the 21st Century, it is *social technologies* — such as the urban energy integration matrix — which will define warfare, both in urban and also (through the *absence* of urban technologies) rural settings. There is no evidence that major military forces actually comprehend this. They still believe that technology alone will prevail and deliver success, even in the face of a series of major strategic military failures. Tactical dominance does not always equate to strategic success. There have been those who have lost every battle, but won the war; we see such evidence around us today.

Warfare had already changed in its nature substantially since the start of the Second Industrial Revolution in the late 19th Century until World War I. The prerogative to initiate or accept warfare increasingly became the prerogative of the cities, and wars were waged more and more with urban thinking which itself became increasingly driven by science and technology, the forte of “urban man”. It progressed with increasing efficiency and capability to become true “total war” by the time the 20th Century had ended.³¹ It became total war in the sense that conflicts engaged — directly or indirectly — every sector of society, both psychologically and with regard to the logistical and industrial support base required to wage it.

Urban societies proved that they were most adept at formal warfare: the business of organized military force utilizing an unprecedented efficiency in the man-machine interface or man-tool integration.

30 See, among other writings, a particularly good exposition of this in: Higham, Robin: *Two Roads to War: The French and British Air Arms from Versailles to Dunkirk*. Annapolis, Maryland, 2012: US Naval Institute Press.

31 Dr Stefan Possony, in *Tomorrow's War*, noted: “War is ‘total’ in the sense that it mobilizes all a country's forces, but not in the sense that it really hits the whole of the enemy country.” *Tomorrow's War*, London, 1938, William Hodge & Co. Ltd.

But surprisingly, when warfare was engaged at *less* than total war levels — where industrial, urbanized states, and traditional societies were forced to fight guerilla war — the advantage often went to the traditional society, which was less dependent on long logistical lines, and the complex needs of modern weapons systems and vehicles. The assumption that industrial and economic superiority meant automatic victory over a less-capable opponent fighting on his own territory was repeatedly brought into question in the US Civil War, the Boer War, and other engagements, but the large-scale informal (asymmetric) conflicts of the 21st Century brought the matter into stark relief.

Modern warfare between urban-dominated states, from the late 18th to the late 20th centuries, proved the prowess of the great cities to command the industries necessary to arm and sustain warfare, and to fund it. It also demonstrated the efficacy of the *balanced nation-state*, which could not only provide the weapons, but also the manpower, foodstuffs, and energy to sustain conflict, and simultaneously sustain the homeland. This balanced command and control of industrial and financial, rural and resource capabilities guaranteed that states had a strong measure of control over their destiny in war. All of this balance had disappeared by the early 21st Century, at least for most major nation-states.

Governments, by the end of the first decade of the 21st Century, had lost sight of any conscious requirement for balance — the true meaning of strategic depth — in their national essence. Governments all, to one degree or another, “outsourced” their strategic needs, often placing undue reliance on treaties and alliances, forgetting that in all alliances it is only the lesser partner which feels the obligation of duty.³²

32 See Copley, *The Art of Victory*, *op cit*, Chapter 19, “Loyalty and Survival”, and the

In many respects, however, the rôle of national security in national survival has been viewed too narrowly. Indeed, because although there is talk of “total war” engaging an entire society, there is usually less than an “all-of-government” (let alone “all-of-society”) response to facing national threats, or even achieving “national goals”. Threats and goals are, in fact, hardly ever clearly delineated, and therefore elude solution or achievement. Meanwhile, the balance of power and geopolitical shape of the world are only occasionally *determined* — although sometimes *influenced* — by military conflict. They are more often shaped by *preparation* for military conflict — deterrence and strategic maneuver — rather than conflict itself.

Conventional warfare — formal military conflict — however, is at a pivotal point of transformation as to its nature, reflecting the transformation of societies into urban-dominated groupings which are totally dependent on energy consumption for every facet of survival in the delivery of food, water, mobility, communications, and economic endeavor. The nature of warfare, then, will reflect the change of human social shaping. That is not to deny that conflict often serves to clear sclerosis in societies.

The post-World War II rise of Germany, Japan, Italy, and France — which all suffered military defeat at some time during World War II — was determined by non-conflict means. The post-Cold War regeneration of Russia, the surge of the People’s Republic of China, and the post-Korean War rise of the Republic of Korea, all were products of non-conflict-determined factors. In order for these societies to be capable of their regeneration, then, it may have been necessary for them to have endured the catharsis of defeat. Indeed, the United States of America began its rise

chapter maxim, which states: “Mutual loyalty exists only between equals. In all other instances, loyalty flows only in any durable form from the weaker to the more powerful.”

to global power on the ashes of the Civil War of 1860-65.

It does not follow axiomatically, however, that economic/strategic rise can only occur as a result of cathartic and national-level loss. The world's scientific and industrial baselines grew substantially as a direct result of World Wars I and II. The global dominance which the US came to achieve for a period after World War II was, as a particular example, directly the result of the challenges which caused a whole-of-nation response. There can be no doubt that the great and balanced strategic depth of the US — a balance of its resources, agriculture, industry, economic posture, and social cohesion and identity (as it then had) — going into World War II was what enabled the US to then achieve a half-century of further strategic dominance.

So it does follow — almost axiomatically — that a balanced fighting force is, in periods of sustained pressure, meaningless without a balanced economy (strategic depth in more than geographic terms) to provide the real shape and substance of strategic power. In other words, a successful fighting force can only be sustained by profound strategic depth. Modern urban-dominated society has transformed what that means, and while we have seen that urban (and therefore, almost by definition, neo- or pseudo-post-industrial) nations have great capabilities in capital formation, they also have great vulnerabilities, largely due to their dependence on resources which are not generated by their urbanization. And the delivery mechanisms for those resources and their use within urban society are totally energy-integrated. Therein lies the new vulnerability.

Let us not oversimplify, however, and think in 20th Century terms that this energy dependence merely reflects the digging, transportation, and burning of fossil fuels. It is far more complex, now, than that.

Despite this reality that it is the *comprehensive* shape, ar-

chitecture, and cohesion/productivity (in all, depth) of an entire society — and certainly not forgetting its defense capabilities — which gives it true strategic strength, it is worth asking what the future shape of warfare holds for us. We should do this before we embark, once again, on a new generation of military spending, so that funds are not squandered where they are not most useful.

We have seen on the horizon of military conflict the mortality, for example, of the viability in total war situations of naval carrier battle groups. This mortality has been developing because of the transforming nature and proliferation of submarine-launched nuclear torpedoes, supersonic (and soon hypersonic) long-range anti-ship missiles, the advent of precisely-targetable and maneuverable anti-fleet ballistic nuclear missiles, and so on. The People's Republic of China has worked assiduously to develop these offensive capabilities, and yet it persists in working toward its own (by definition, seemingly vulnerable) carrier battle group development.

This is not incongruous. It highlights the reality that some power projection systems, which may be vulnerable in total war, are massively impressive in shaping situations in times of peace, or in limited war scenarios. The battleship endured successfully into the late 20th Century under such conditions, albeit with gradually declining cost-effectiveness.

We have seen the transformation of the fortunes of modern societies — some for ill, some for prospering fortune — during the first decade of the 21st Century. Arguably, those “modern” neo/pseudo-post-industrial societies which saw decline during this period lost their relative strategic strength because of failures of diplomacy, arrogance of leadership, and failure to heed the historical need for balance in society. This “balance” includes the need for social

identity and common purpose — including linguistic commonality — which can only be achieved through conscious and persistent reinforcement. It also includes the need for a high degree of balanced self-sustainment in terms of the production and consumption of vital goods and services. How this “balanced self-sustainment” is achieved has been transformed by the urbanization of these societies.

In this regard, dependence for vital goods and services on a separate sovereign entity (ie: another nation), possibly a strategic competitor, becomes a point of vulnerability and distortion. Hence, globalization of goods and services must be seen for what it is: a holiday from the historical pattern of competitive societies. Sun-tzu, the author of *The Art of War*, highlighted the reality that the waging of war showed that all other forms of policy had failed. I reinforced this in *The Art of Victory*, and highlighted that the “Age of Globalization” was — like the earlier such age under Genghis Khan — transformative in that it would lead to vulnerabilities in societies which had deliberately forsaken a whole-of-society approach to their own interests, security, and identity. Yet, as Chinese writer Huai-nan Tzu noted before his death in 122 BCE: “When sovereign and ministers show perversity of mind, it is impossible even for a Sun-tzu to encounter [ie: defeat] the foe.”

We are driven, in our modern societies (but not in traditional societies) into believing that security issues are the province of uniformed — and uniform — armed services (from police to the military), and that economic issues are the province of non-uniformed sectors of the society. As a result, when “security” threats become visible (a sign, in fact, of failed intelligence or failed governance and deterrence), the response is to place all faith and authority in the hands of the military. As the US maxim goes: “When you

are a hammer, everything looks like a nail.”

The hammer is now becoming more complex and expensive. And everywhere nails proliferate, while coffers run dry.

Yet still the strategic tide and balance of power turns against the neo/pseudo-post-industrial societies (but not against the more-balanced industrial societies). At the same time, in most Western states, in which populist approaches to democracy prevail, there is a persistent stubbornness — Huai-nan Tzu’s “perversity” — which disengages the security and strategic relative positioning of the state and society from the challenges. There are attempts to engage in diplomacy without supportive power. There are, equally, attempts to sustain military power without supportive political-economic-diplomatic power.

The future of conflict must be viewed, then, as something far broader than military warfare, and yet something which neither can be won by diplomacy nor economic power alone. This is not a new concept, but it has been deliberately forgotten, as politicians continue their quest for power without responsibility. Deterrence — the creation of a viable, war-capable and feared military force — is critical to sustaining influence. But the use of that force in actual combat, assuming it has been well-crafted and given the prestige and visibility it requires, represents the failure of political and diplomatic management, and of society as a whole.

The PRC may build its carrier battle fleets to demonstrate that it is indeed a great world power. Indeed, it cannot fail to do so. It knows, however, that it must prevail through other means. If it must engage in “war”, then it should be indirect and, ideally, deceptive. Cyber war, used so well by the PRC and its allies tactically of late in support of domestic and international operations, could easily close down

the economies and viability of the US and other advanced societies.

Cyber capabilities hold the key to the survival — literally on a day-to-day basis — of modern, urban populations.

Cyber defenses are well beyond the domain of the uniformed military (although the military must be part of this). Thus the investment of governments in cyber defenses, and offensive capabilities, cannot be neglected. Like intelligence capabilities, they must operate discreetly, but require a fluidity of thought and operation which defy formal, uniformed service logic in many instances.

It is worth dwelling on the impact of cyber war, because it is this which may be influential on the survival of the urban areas of the great powers, particularly the United States, over the coming decades. Significantly, by 2011, emerging changes in the Internet — one of the important areas of cyber warfare terrain — actually made the security situation more complex.

What is significant is that well-executed cyber warfare would transform the meaning of “total war” well beyond its definition in the 20th Century. A report entitled “The New Rules of War”, which I prepared in April 2011, noted that the West’s approach to fighting “asymmetric warfare” in the first decade of the 21st Century, had led to the strategic defeat of the Western powers who engaged in it, because it allowed them to be bled dry by inferior forces. And, as that report noted: “Nothing reduces the financial, casualty, and political costs of war as much as rapid mission success.” The kinetic end of future conflict, at least for some time, will continue to be re-structured to be less “casualty-intense” than the great wars of the 20th Century, but at what cost to mission success? Even without the Western “casualty aversion”, most of the military conflicts of the early 21st Century will be less “full frontal”, and therefore less kinetic than

the big 20th Century wars.

The real casualties could well occur at the other end of the battlefield: on the home front. And that is where wars will be won or lost. Cyber warfare will, if successfully conducted, achieve “rear area denial-of-service”: it will cut off electrical supply to the sprawling cities. This in turn, if it is pervasive, will cut off all computer-based traffic and communications; it will cut transportation links, even the ability to extract gasoline from fuel pumps (electrically- and computer-driven); it will cut water distribution; the ability to move food. It is assumed that such attacks could only cause very short-term disruption to society, but that is not the case. Comprehensive denial-of-service attacks (although techno-geeks keep inventing new names for this phenomenon), the power authorities know, would be so multi-layered and penetrating that recovery — getting power back on and services restored — in any major urban setting could take weeks or months.

The 8.9 magnitude earthquake and ensuing *tsunami* which occurred just offshore the Japanese city of Sendai, on March 11, 2011, impacting the north-east coastal Tohoku region, at the north-east of the main island of Honshu, sent tremors through Japan’s — and the trading world’s — economic systems. It also highlighted major areas of strategic vulnerability in societies and military systems. It produced a microscopic example of the kind of chaos which would occur in a human-induced “rear area denial-of-service” strategic-level attack, or even a disguised-source major interruption of service attack. We began to see traces of this in covert attacks on US water utilities in late 2011³³.

The Japanese event and consequent aftershocks and damage immediately engaged all available civil and mili-

33 See, for example, “US probes cyber attack on water system”; Reuters news agency, November 18, 2011; highlighting a report that foreign hackers managed to shut down an Illinois water utility operation.

tary resources, and the total attention of government. Fortunately, the events occurred at a time of peace, and in a country with a military and civil force more experienced perhaps than any other in the world in disaster response. The damage to infrastructure and population represented the kind of situation which could occur in civil societies in modern, full-scale conflict, in which the strategic rear of a society is targeted.

The economic and political ramifications of the event began to unfold over the ensuing months, as did the lessons for emergency management and governance on a strategic level. However, some ramifications and lessons were already clear at the beginning, including the ability to handle environmental or infrastructural chaos at a tactical level, and the consequences which the tactical can have on the strategic.

Studies of this incident should view Japan's situation as a watershed lesson in response, and should see the handling in comparison with the tactical approach which the US and some Coalition partners applied to the prosecution of operations in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. The US approached ground operations in Iraq, and then Afghanistan, believing that the full might of a combined "Big Army" approach (and this also drew in the Marine Corps) could prosecute operations with relative impunity. The US designed ground mobility systems to provide maximum apparent protection to troops, so that its forces could — they hoped — conduct operations with minimal loss of life.

It became clear from the outset that casualties were politically unacceptable to the US and Western electorates, and, as a result, the US attempted to impose on the conflict zones the terms of engagement. In order to save the lives of its own troops, it built vehicles which maximized armored protection, but which lacked true nimbleness and mobility

away from fixed roadways. The problem was that the enemy could not afford to embrace this US code of conduct, and the anti-Coalition forces remained mobile, and were thus able to conduct a low-cost, high-result campaign which caused the US (in particular) to escalate its spending — and its political cost — on the war.

All of this was a consequence of a military focus on own-force casualty minimization by the US, without a commensurate (or superior) focus on mission success.

In the case of the US approach, it was based on the presumption that wealth could alone ensure success without human cost. Moreover, it grew to assume (*de facto*) that mission success was not of equal priority to casualty reduction, and did not assume that mission success-based thinking could shorten the war, minimize the casualties, and minimize the political/strategic/economic cost. Obviously, mission success requires social contextual skills which need to be addressed, but for the moment let us dwell merely on the physical responses and doctrines.

To re-cap: *Nothing reduces the financial, casualty, and political costs of war as much as rapid mission success.*

Now, as we enter a new era of conflict, in which cyber/electrical dislocation will be critical to rear-area (homeland) disruption — jeopardizing the ability of a government to sustain military operations in the forward area because of the collapse of society and economies at home — it will be critical to be able to sustain more nimble and independent tactical operations, linked into a strategic management matrix, which can address both induced chaos at home while prosecuting kinetic and occupation conflict at the front end.

The lessons of the Japanese disaster were a critical demonstration of rear-area (homeland) challenges and the impact that they have on the resources of the military and

concentration of the Government.

The Japanese Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) operated with speed and efficiency to undertake emergency disaster relief operations in the wake of the earthquake and *tsunami*. Japan, as its operations to aid rescue in Christchurch, New Zealand, following the major earthquake there just before the Japanese incident, showed that it was a world leader in disaster relief operations.

The immediate physical response to the March 2011 disaster was not, then, the major area for formal military lessons. Rather, the scope of the disaster highlighted the kind of disruptions which could challenge societies in major conflict situations.

Clearly, conventional military forces project power with “conventional” systems and structures, but increasingly in actual conflict situations, governments will be challenged by threats to the viability of urban societies — even down to township levels — which will determine ultimately whether a society can sustain itself in competition with its adversaries. These situations will replicate in many respects — and exceed in many other respects — the situation which Japan began to face with the March 2011 natural disaster.

The target area of the disaster in Japan was able, across large swathes of territory, to access at least some supply of electricity, despite major disruptions. This enabled many aspects of society to continue to function during the chaos, using cellphones, accessing (electrically-powered delivery of) fuel for motor vehicles, delivering some water supplies, and so on. Had the power disruption been more widespread, societies would have been restricted to utilizing only the power they had in motor vehicles or associated with stand-alone generators, and the like.

In a major conflict situation, cyber and physical attacks

would aim to disrupt these networks far more comprehensively than the earthquake/*tsunami* did in the relatively low-density population areas of Japan. A major intervention in the computer controls of electrical grids — quite apart from interfering with the electrical grids themselves — could severely impact major urban areas (such as the interconnected urban groupings of the north-east of the North American continent). It could, after a very few days, inhibit the delivery of food and water through pipeline, road, and rail systems, bearing in mind the computer/power dependency of the logistical systems. Within a short period of time, major military logistical systems would need to be deployed to help stave off widespread chaos, starvation, water shortages, etc., diverting the bulk of the armed forces from their military missions.

The earthquake/*tsunami* damage in the March 2011 event in Japan had, in less than a week, already been shown to have caused tens of thousands of casualties, billions of dollars' worth of losses, and the diversion of all government resources. The impact of a strategic-level targeted denial of service attack on cyber and electrical facilities in a dense urban region could be far more significant.

What lessons, then, does this portend for strategic planners and warfighters?

1. ***Maintaining life and productivity in civilian population areas*** will be as critical as prosecuting offensive military operations, because a breakdown of rear-area population control will pre-determine the outcome of any conflict. Tomorrow's major war, as strategist Possony presaged in his 1938 book, *Tomorrow's War*, will — as we discussed earlier — be “total war” in the very real sense that it will be as pervasive at the rear area as it will be at the kinetic spearpoint of uniformed military operations. As Possony highlighted in his forward looking analysis of

the lessons of World War I, because of logistical and social disruptions (including disruptions to food supply), a vulnerable strategic rear can render forward area military operations strategically meaningless as to the outcome of the war. Germany lost World War I in large part because its rear area — its towns and cities — fell victim to chaos and despair, and not merely because of its battlefield losses. So, too, did Russia collapse during World War I because of the chaos and despair on the home front;

2. ***Ruggedized, highly-mobile, grid-independent, fossil-fuel-independent electric power generation*** will become critical for warfighters and relief operations alike. This capability will need to be married closely to the provision of water purification/extraction systems which are also totally independent of fixed electrical power supplies or fuels which require heavy transportation. Ideally, highly-mobile electrical power generation and water purification/desalination/handling systems need to be matched in a new logistical capability which would be the center of communications and support for mobile formations;
3. ***Transitional storage devices — batteries, for the most part — are at the core of the capability of new systems.*** Lighter, more capable “smart” batteries are being developed to enable truly sustainable use of solar-generated electricity for a mobile force. In other words, it will be necessary to capture energy on the move. This implies that a key area of future capability must be in continually improved electrical storage devices, as part of the development of lighter weight forward area power generation and water handling systems;
4. ***The ability to create power and water independently of a logistical train of vehicles, pipelines, and powerlines***

will be critical in locations which are either physically remote (as in, for example, forward-deployed military forces) or “artificially remote” (as in areas rendered difficult because of disaster or other disruption). This means that power/water management vehicles will need to be light, off-road capable, and able to remain in operation without a diesel fuel supply train for long periods. These vehicles — which could be developed in a range of sizes for a range of missions — would form the basis of a forward military HQ or a community reconstruction/relief site. The ability to have power and clean water would make the units the core of the sustenance of forward military operations or disaster relief, including nuclear washdown, and the like, as well as the ability to sustain life in devastated areas;

5. The Honshu disaster, as well as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, highlighted the reality that ***the heavy logistical train required for diesel fuel and water greatly hampers operations*** and adds unacceptably to the economic and political cost.

The entire approach to handling a complex military operation — whether in support of disaster relief or the prosecution of kinetic operations — requires a new approach to planning and must be able to ensure that all functions of “society under pressure” (hit by natural or cyber-war-caused disaster) and military operations can be sustained in independent modules. In other words, the new approach must think in some respects in diametric difference to the 20th Century approach of total and organic integration. Yes, the ability for overarching command, control, and communications (C³) must be retained, but this must be achieved by units capable of independent operations.

This, in essence, means that redundant strategic capabilities must be created one module at a time. Only in this way

can major military systems remain effective in the face of the kind of disruptive operations which new-generation warfare will generate.

To achieve comprehensive strategic progress — achieving the security and economic and social strengths of our societies — we must look to grand strategies which re-think how we achieve military deterrence and power projection, while giving real teeth to society through assuring its cohesion, and a balance of its production and consumption which guarantees a high degree of self-control over one's own fortunes and fate.

For Western societies to overwhelmingly pump the vastness of their fortunes into two low-production sectors — military spending and “entitlement” benefits — is the path to defeat within the emerging global balance of power. To avoid developing “off-the-grid” solutions to urban survival and forward military operations, and to fail to develop creative, hardened defenses against cyber attack, is recklessness leading to national suicide.

We talked of the growing significance of cyber warfare; indeed, modern urban society is very much persuaded that this is a totally new and unique phenomenon, without precedence. It is not. And we need to see it in its broader strategic and historical context, which is why I've entitled the next chapter “The Binary Zimmerman”.

XIX

The Binary Zimmerman

The historic and wider context of cyber warfare, and why it's too important to let it be dominated by the technocrats.

EVERY GENERATION SEES THE TECHNOLOGY and resultant weapons of its time as unique to it, and the hallmark of its superiority. The more complex the technology, and the higher the percentage of national and personal economies devoted to it, the more narrowly embedded and focused the adherents become to it and within it.

This means that they see less of the vital context, and history's warp and weft. That context, that socio-geographic setting, is the *only* thing which gives meaning to the new technologies and capabilities.

This is particularly true of the current iteration of electrically-dependent strategic and tactical civil and military systems, of which cyber technologies and cyber warfare are part. There is, particularly within US culture, an obsessive focus on the process, without meaningful regard to *setting* and *context*.

There is no understanding, for example, that the current "cyber war" preoccupation — which is indeed a valid concern — fails to take into account the orderly yet quantum progression of urban/machine society which began to be "electrified" by the late 19th Century. Since then, we have

progressed, because of that urbanization and technological tool-building, through to the situation in the early 21st Century of being totally dependent on electricity for survival and prosperity. Cyber warfare is part of this, as is the logical increase in the vulnerability and importance of electrical grids.

From a direct conflict standpoint, what we see today is the progressive extrapolation of the electricity (and therefore raw energy) dependence which began to gain momentum with the hydro-power, coal, and then oil and gas systems of the first and second Industrial Revolutions. Dependence on electrical linkages has, since they were first developed in the late 19th Century, well into the Second Industrial Revolution, provided opportunity and vulnerability. The critical nature of the cryptanalysis of Britain's Room 40 codebreakers in 1917, in uncovering the Zimmerman Telegram and then having the UK Government leak that document to the press, caused political consequences vital to the Allied victory in World War I. [The Zimmerman Telegram, as it has come to be known, was a message from State Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the German Empire Arthur Zimmerman on January 16, 1917, to the German Ambassador in Washington, DC, Johann von Bernstorff, to be passed on to the German Ambassador to Mexico, urging Mexico to declare war on the United States of America in the event that the US joined the Great War on the side of the Allies. British release of this decoded message caused the US to declare war on Germany and the Axis powers.]

The linkages between intelligence, psycho-political warfare, and electronic spectrum offensive and defense (and communications) operations has, since the dawn of the 20th Century, been profound, but there has always been a schism between the culture of codes and electronics, and the cultures of politics and strategy. It has always been diffi-

cult to achieve the best (and most efficient) use of technological capabilities to deliver truly strategic outcomes because of these cultural differences between the different practitioner groups.

The 2011 book, *Joe Rochefort's War: The Odyssey of the Codebreaker Who Outwitted Yamamoto at Midway*, highlights the World War II cultural conflicts between the US naval intelligence and naval communications security (COMSEC, COMINT, etc.) communities which hampered progress for the US in that war. That was just one example. We saw the whole world of electronic warfare (EW) and electronic countermeasures (ECM), and communications intelligence (COMINT), signals intelligence (SIGINT), electronic intelligence (ELINT), and so on, blossom through World War II, the Korean War, and (particularly) the Vietnam War and the late 20th Century Middle Eastern wars.

There was little doubt that the US possessed greater overall EW capability and firepower than North Vietnam and its Soviet and PRC backers in the Vietnam War, and yet the US lost that war through political as well as military missteps when, arguably, it could have won it. So even by the time of the Vietnam War, we saw such an increase in technological specialization, and therefore cultural divergence from strategic thinking, that technological capabilities dominated, and they failed to deliver desired national-level outcomes.

By 2012 (indeed, well before that year), the West's dependence on electrical power (and the basic energy sources which feed that), and on increasingly complex electronic tools, meant that more and more social and economic focus was being placed on the tools — which represent the *process* — than on strategic context and on considering national grand strategies and desired national goals. As noted,

this process was a direct result of mass urbanization, which can function efficiently only because of the contribution of increasingly complex and integrated electrically-powered tools. But it generated a society which became more tool-oriented, and less experience- and context-oriented.

Little wonder that — more than a year after he was dismissed by US Pres. Barack Obama after being mistakenly attributed with comments criticizing Obama — former US Commander, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Commander, US Forces Afghanistan (US FOR-A) Gen. (rtd.) Stanley McChrystal said on October 6, 2011, that the US did not understand Afghanistan when it invaded it 10 years earlier, and still failed to understand it, despite the massive projection of forces and power into that country. “We didn’t know enough, and we still don’t know enough. ... Most of us — me included — had a very superficial understanding of the situation and history, and we had a frighteningly simplistic view of recent history, the last 50 years.”

Little wonder, too, that the military view of “victory” in Afghanistan and Iraq failed to embrace what was needed to achieve strategic success for the US. Indeed, it begs the question of why the rest of the Coalition states allowed themselves to be drawn into the Afghanistan (and Iraq) conflict when they, too, failed to ask basic questions about ultimate goals.

All of this gets to the point of how we frame our perspective on warfighting, strategic projection, national goals, and technology. At present, Western states have divorced warfighting functions and process from context and national and transnational goals, and it is for this reason that failures occur. This has reinforced the military — and more importantly, the technologists’ — contented escapism in “stovepiping”; restricting themselves to the technologies,

rather than to the broader geospatial and social context and strategic outcomes. The result is that military costs and efforts tend to be disproportionately high in relation to their contribution to national goals and desired outcomes.

An example of this mind-numbing, out-of-context (one might even say out-of-body) process is the US Army's preoccupation with what it calls its LandISRnet, the Army's networked intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) system, designed to convey relevant target information to troops at the forward edge of the battlefield (now with yet more jargon-laden hype: "relevant ISR to the tactical edge [RITE]"). That would be a perfectly laudable application of current technology, but for the fact that the system — the "network" — has become the preoccupation, and the context, and even mission goals within a strategic framework, have become forgotten. US Army Intelligence professionals become lost in a welter of jargon about the technologies and processes, from cloud computing concepts to arcade game approaches to information presentation.

There is no doubt: jargon has become the ultimate — and shameful — refuge of both the military and the technocrat in the avoidance of a comprehension of the real world; the real strategic terrain; the real context.

The technology does not overcome the fundamental rule of information activities in computing environments: garbage in equals garbage out. Yes, the LandISRnet system focuses on getting good tactical sensor data into the system, but it does nothing to contribute to what should be the major concern: understanding the adversary, the history of the situation, one's own and one's adversaries' strategic goals, and the necessity for true wisdom to replace mere functional technology. In short, the system does nothing to address the fact that most of the users now fail to read books

or to engage in any independent cultural and strategic understanding.

The current US — and particularly US military — approach absolutely obscures the operational context, and, as Gen. McChrystal pointed out, 10 years of conflict in Afghanistan had still failed to educate the US military or government on history or context. This writer has already postulated that the preoccupation with process has cost the US its strategic access to the Central Asian energy markets, and its dominance of the Persian Gulf.

Gen. McChrystal has been quoted — earlier, during his military career — as saying that it takes a networked (ie: electronically networked/net-centric) force to defeat a networked force. That merely says that it takes a modern conventional military force to defeat another modern conventional military force. But the Afghanistan war until the 2012-14 timeframe, and, to a large extent, the latest Iraq war, were not about a modern, conventional force fighting a match-set conflict with another modern, conventional force. It has been about how an un-networked, unconventional force could defeat — by protraction and frustration — a modern, conventional nation-state. [Anti-Coalition forces were “networked” in that they used whatever social and technological means were available to them, but wolf-packs do that, too. The Coalition did not face a “networked force” in the same sense as their own.]

Part of the distortion of US thinking — and therefore, by default, much of Western strategic goal attainment — has been the growing tendency to focus on the *process* of the technologies available to them, rather than their contribution to actual national objectives. The parallel is the preoccupation with a car’s engine, rather than the view of a car as a means to deliver its occupants to the point at which they need to be.

We have now allowed the engineers to drive the ships of state. This time, the engineers are the “cyber warriors”, and even this term makes them appear to be more than the enablers (of defense and offense) they are meant to be.

The whole process of urbanization, and absolute urban dependency on constantly-flowing electricity, means that the cyber state — cyber war and cyber peace — has transcended the civil-military divide. Moreover, in cyber-security terms (which also equates to energy security terms), it makes the civil side far more critical than the military, because of the vulnerability of the economy (urban-dominated) to disruption. It means that major civil population structures and the military both need to develop the means to isolate and secure their power sources — as well as their data traffic — and to consider new approaches to potential conflict situations.

The failure of civil network managers — from the delivery of raw energy materials to the creation and distribution of electricity and motive fuels, to the management of communications networks: the integrated package — to comprehend their vulnerability is matched by military thinkers not comprehending the fact that the real wars will be in the rear area infrastructures. Kinetic wars over the coming decade or so are likely to be very theater-constrained, and will be less likely to involve “networked forces against networked forces”.

That reality makes it even more important — if it *could* be more important — for strategic and military planners to give greater priority to understanding their own, and their missions’, strategic context. The dangers to one’s own interests include not only hostile intent by a foreign power or entity, but also the frailty or delicacy of the civil and military infrastructures. These delicacies do not refer solely to the relative hardening of systems (civil and military) to

withstand penetration and disruption, but also the dangers of social and political trends which undermine a state's ability to sustain its costly civil and military infrastructures.

In the military context, apart from being exposed to a fragile national and international infrastructure and economic base (ie: the basis for defense funding), little consideration seems to have been given to the *real* security of satellite communications, cloud computing, and the like. Net-centric warfare — and such systems as LandISRnet — are designed for “networked forces *versus* network forces”, but are, in fact, being used by networked forces only against informally-networked “asymmetrically inferior” forces. The reality is that in symmetrical, “networked *versus* networked” forces, strategic electronic links are exceptionally vulnerable to disruption (as well as interception), and considerations such as anti-satellite warfare, electro-magnetic pulse (EMP) and other issues must be taken into account.

And even with this complex, vulnerable and totally pre-occupying process, no consideration has been given to understanding the strategic terrain, the context, of future operations. A candid observation is that much of it stems from the intrinsic belief by many in uniform, and many among the urban youth, that reading history is a waste of time (*versus* “pop history” which can be gained on the Internet), and that true cultural interaction and the acquisition of strategic wisdom — which involves sweat, travel, and humility— is also unnecessary.

Why is it that at some key, senior US military courses there is no requirement (or time) to actually read any books? Course material is often *extracted* from chapters, from articles, and from official papers, but in what way does this compensate for deep learning?

So, as always: garbage in equals garbage out (GIGO). The outbound garbage we see is the decline of modern econo-

mies, their citizens Googling while Rome burns.

But we are not done considering the strategic interface between technology and society, and how *process*, rather than objectives, dominates our ability — or otherwise — to change in order to meet new demands.

XX

Can the “Supply Chain” Save Civilization?

MANY, WITH A GREAT FAITH IN THE LOGIC of self-interest as a motivating force for human behavior, said that World War I could not occur because the trading dependencies between the Western powers were so interwoven that those great states of Christendom could not afford to engage in internecine warfare. Much the same was said in the run-up to World War II. Globalized trade, by the early 21st Century, made the world far more interdependent than it was on the eves of both those great “wars for civilization”.

There can be little doubt that trade and economic exchange can cement alliances and the cultural, as well as strategic, interests of societies. Logically, these commercial ties lead often to cultural and then military alliances. But, as in all relationships, one party usually dominates, and begins to overwhelm its partners. Dependency patterns develop in the shape of addictions, often with the benefits in delicate balance against the loss of independence and resilience of the junior partners.

All of this gets to the point of how the trading architecture — supply chain issues, in modern parlance — becomes interwoven between commercial and military processes. We can see how dependencies, or processes, drive civil and military alliances and affect — at first positively,

and later often negatively — the ability of societies to react, or to achieve their goals.

It has become an article of faith that logistics is the dominant factor in modern military success; that — as Napoleon Bonaparte said — an “army marches on its stomach”. That being “the firstest with the mostest” is the most desirable attribute of military strategy.

But perhaps we have taken the extension of the logistical and procurement supply chain, as the core of coalition warfare, to its logical extreme. We need to look at the two principle components: the impact of “macro-logistics” and supply chain architecture; and the transforming nature of logistics in military, and particularly “new battlefield” scenarios³⁴.

“Macro-Logistics” and Supply Chain Architecture

Military logistics, *writ large*, have become the central theme of modern alliance structures. This has moved “logistics” — or the ramifications of them — in many instances out of the operational military sense and into nation-state strategic frameworks.

Perhaps the tail has come to wag the dog. Perhaps (dare it be said?) we have forgotten the reality that the strategic objectives of military commanders and the states they represent in the 21st Century may differ from those of the 20th. And that technology, new alliance relationships, and changing power structures — as well as changing social structures — have transformed how, when, and why we conduct warfare or strategic maneuver between states.

³⁴ See the *Defense & Foreign Affairs* study, “The New Rules of War: Fight Symmetrically, Stay Engaged, and Prioritize Timely Mission Success”, in *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 4/2011. The report was based on studies by the International Strategic Studies Association (ISSA), and briefings to the US Army Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), US African Command (USAFRICOM), and the US Army War College by Gregory Copley.

It could even be argued that strategic military logistics, including the comprehensive supply chain in major military systems manufacturing and support, came to the point in the late 20th Century to be the underlying *driver* (although not the purpose) of alliance structures. And because of this deep and pervasive supply chain and high-value military hardware interdependence, the technology, security (including intelligence), and military doctrinal relationships which evolved within the two major security pacts — the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Warsaw Treaty Organization — meant that states actually became *locked* into the operating structures of the dominant powers, the US and Soviet Union respectively. This security structural interdependence, or dependence, was far more compelling — for reasons of practicality — than any ideological or even monetary or economic compatibility in their alliance relationships.

The Cold War was, as this great process evolved, the triumph of logistics — essentially military or strategic logistics, including to a large extent the logistics of energy supply — over the strategic self-determination of individual states within alliances. It was, essentially, a more compelling form of colonial binding than the colonialism of the first half of the 20th Century because the entire military-industrial, intelligence, political, and economic structures of a state became intertwined with those of the senior alliance partner.

Two things brought this economically and scientifically highly-productive process to an end:

- Firstly, the end of the Cold War itself, which enabled a more fluid process of social and commercial globalization; and
- Secondly, also as a direct result of the end of the Cold War and the brief period of globalized realignment, we saw economic and strategic changes in the balance of power.

The security and ideological impetus for states to remain within alliances essentially diminished. Absent direct security threats, secondary member states of alliances felt less impetus to remain locked into a posture of hostility to their former foes.

What remained constant, however, were the mutual interrelationships created by common defense systems, the common military doctrine (reinforced by the decades of “interoperability” requirement), and lingering alliance and emotional ties (in many instances). In essence, even though the nature of the security environment had changed, along with the methodology of 21st Century warfare, states and their military architectures remained prisoners of old doctrine and existing weapons platforms and their maintenance requirements. Major weapons systems routinely last a half century in service; military doctrines, while evolving, are often rooted in practices and prejudices which last a century or more.

As well, military-strategic interoperability of defense systems *and* the procurement chain, on the one hand, and the interoperability and seamless interaction of national security operating doctrines on the other came to mean that political structures began to “harmonize” between alliance member states. We saw it with the Warsaw Treaty states. How quickly we forget that it was a Georgian — Joseph Stalin, born Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili — who was accepted as leader of the Soviet Union, and that Georgia has now gone its own way from that empire. Or, on the Western side, that Field Marshal Jan Smuts, a Prime Minister of South Africa, was also a British Field Marshal. Or that Canadian and Australian senior military officers today serve in senior positions in US military commands.

And if we do not forget these cooperative activities between alliance members, do we remember as well as we

should how, when alliances finally wither and die, despite the seemingly-inexorable ties which bind them, they do tend to change their strategic and economic priorities? This is an extremely difficult and disruptive process of change, and yet it is a process which the former Soviet Union — and the overlapping Warsaw Treaty Organization — underwent in the space of a very few years from 1990. Now, we are seeing the slower, and less stark, break-up of the North Atlantic Alliance and its associated sub-alliances, or sister-alliances, such as ANZUS (essentially an Australian-US alliance).

What makes the transformation of the North Atlantic Alliance (formal), and the more broadly-based Western Alliance (informal) less crystallized and dramatic than the break-up of the Warsaw Treaty is that no cataclysmic collapse has yet occurred to confront the Western Alliance as a whole, so the process of drift from central authority (the US) has been less rapid. But, equally, if the absence of crisis or threat has removed any urgency from the transformation of, say, NATO, then so too has the absence of threat made cohesion within the alliance less necessary for the member states.

What keeps them linked, to a large degree, is the fact that all the member states have locked their military operations and military procurement around similar systems and doctrines.

In short, NATO works too well to disrupt just for the sake of disrupting it. The buggy whip has been perfected even though there are no longer any horses and buggies requiring the whip.

The “buggy whip” — NATO — has become a perfect system in search of a mission. And all of its quests since the end of the Cold War have seen a gradual diminution of the nobility and purpose for which it was created, given that it

cannot readily address a set of commonly-perceived existential threats to each of the alliance members. So, could the alliance which has served as the legal and cultural framework for much of Western cohesion during the Cold War period break apart in the near future? We have only to look at two other organizations which were created to extend the anti-Soviet framework of containment: the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO: US, UK, Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan); and the South-East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO: Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan [including what is now Bangladesh], the Philippines, Thailand, the UK, and the US). CENTO and SEATO ceased to exist in the late 1970s, in large part because they had no interlocking structural binding, such as the macro-logistics which bound NATO.

Viewed from this perspective, the question must also be asked as to how binding the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) could be, strategically, unless it makes the logistical architecture of the revived Great Silk Route — including the network of oil and gas pipelines and electrical grids — the core of the prosperity of SCO member states.

But looking at NATO and ANZUS, a weakening of links between the major power and the lesser powers is historically inevitable, not only because the global balance has changed and threat and trade issues also have changed. As the perceived threats diminish and the benefits of alliance loyalty decline, the junior partners also are more keenly aware of how often the leading power tends to view the alliance as a one-way affair.³⁵

35 See also, Copley, Gregory R.: the chapter “Loyalty and Survival” in *The Art of Victory*. *Op cit.* That chapter noted, for example: “Loyalty . . . is essentially a one-way traffic except between powers (or individuals) of equal stature and therefore equal and symmetric need. Even under such circumstances, the ‘mutual loyalty’ might better be described as a ‘mutual hostage’ situation, where the survival of each partner is held at risk by the other.” It also noted: “There is, ultimately, no loyalty from the strong to the weak.” The book’s Maxim 19 states: “Mutual loyalty exists only between equals. In all other instances, loyalty flows only in any durable form from

Sooner or later, junior partners go their own way. But sometimes the breakdown of the relationship receives jolts which give impetus to the process. The dramatically rising cost and delayed timeline of the US-led (Lockheed Martin) multi-national F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) project, coming at a time of perceived threat reduction (or at least a time of confused threat horizons), could well be one of the breaks in the NATO and ANZUS alliances as far as the US is concerned.³⁶

Washington has, until now, kept these alliances alive and vital through a series of promises and through the control of the over-arching strategic threat perception. This has enabled the great supply chain interdependence of alliance partners to be kept on the rails, but the coercive power of the US is, in many respects, winding down. Washington is at the point of speaking most harshly to its allies (who might still respond), and less harshly to its perceived competitors, a situation which was predicted when then President-elect Barack Obama indicated that he would scale back US active strategic power projection (and defense spending along with foreign military engagement), and rely more on diplomacy.³⁷ Unsurprisingly, except perhaps

the weaker to the more powerful.”

36 See “F-35 Client States Forced to Begin Re-Thinking”, in *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 10/2011. This report noted, among other things: “Is it time for some clean-sheet analysis to determine whether the national security framework of the second quarter of the 21st Century required (or could afford) something like the F-35, or whether changing realities demanded different solutions? What has been significant, in the meantime, is that most partner states on the F-35 have already surrendered much of their capabilities for independent design and construction of a new fighter program.”

37 In the 10/2008 edition of *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, in an Early Warning column entitled “Continental Drift: Heartland Power Revives”, this writer noted: “Washington’s dramatic reduction in defense spending and power projection — inevitable outcomes of the Obama doctrine — will further erode Washington’s ability to lead the West, or to weld it together. What, then, are some of the outcomes which can be anticipated over the coming decade? Greater nationalism will emerge as governments are forced to make decisions on things which impact them closer to their borders, and absent any real sense of protection from the West’s great umbrella. The West’s impotence was shown dramatically in

to the White House, the rest of the world felt less pressure, as a result, to heed US advice, leading Washington to talk more loudly than before, particularly to its old allies.

To a great degree, the great alliance supply chains created by the USSR and NATO were enabled to find new directions with the end of the Cold War, particularly to the advantage of the NATO/Western Alliance states which had not suffered political and economic implosion in the way that the Warsaw Treaty states had done. So it appeared that the non-governmental sector in the West had been given a new, global market on a silver platter. It was “the peace dividend”, and was, in essence, globalization.

But the cohesion of the Western Alliance still depended, at its core, on the “great technologies” controlled by governments, and particularly the US Government; that which was within the gift of the defense budget. As a result, pressures on defense spending with the 21st Century recessions, coupled with the reduction in perceived state-to-state threats, and the transformation of trade patterns resulting from the end of the Cold War have combined with political calamities such as the strategic failure of the F-35 program (only now becoming apparent), to lead the Western world into a structural reorganization. It is essentially a cratometamorphosis (a realignment of society).

If new alliances are to be forged, or old ones revived (and there are many reasons for this, both in the Western Alliance, and among societies in the Eurasian Continent, Latin America, and Africa), then it behooves national and military leaders to more firmly grasp the nature of threats and warfare into the mid-21st Century. After all, dominant weapons systems, and ways of warfare, remain relevant until they are supplanted. The battleship was not retired for any other reason than it became vulnerable and of less use.

August 2008 with the unsuccessful attempt by Georgia, with clear support at the time from Washington, to push its demands against Russia.”

The crossbow remained significant until it was eclipsed as a weapon. Nuclear weapons will not be retired, or seen as less attractive, until they are able to be countered or supplanted by more effective weapons.

Treaties do not end the primacy or proliferation of weapons. *Countermeasures* and transformed realities (whether technological or social/geopolitical) end the life of weapons. Thus we see the failure of such things as the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the failure of the 1922 Washington Naval Treaty (to limit battleships in numbers and size; the result was new forms of surface combatant vessels). Dr Stefan T. Possony's 1972 concept of a space-based, automated, multinational anti-ballistic missile system could have, had it been pursued, ended the efficacy of nuclear weapons within two decades. But who kept nuclear weapons alive by using the media to attack the Possony concept (put forward by US Pres. Ronald Reagan as the Strategic Defense Initiative)? The so-called "anti-nuclear" lobby, who were supported by the USSR, which knew that an end to nuclear weapons would mean an end to Soviet strategic credibility.

But nuclear weapons, too, are "battleships" and "crossbows", and will pass. In the meantime, they sustain the antique network of coercion and fear and mystique, and the need for apparent (but insubstantial) global governance. Significantly, as economic realities and transformed threat and geopolitical environments change the real needs of national security, so the insecurity of change causes societies to revert to rigid forms of nationalism and xenophobia, and to attempts to strengthen the regulatory frameworks which history is sweeping away. Like rearranging the deckchairs on the *Titanic*, after it has struck the iceberg.

So what *are* the realities of the "new battlefield" and transformed threat response?

Some Thoughts on the Military Logistics of the “New Battlefield”

It was just — as 2012 matured — beginning to be appreciated in the Western political mainstream how the strain of logistical support for the recent Western wars — in Iraq, Afghanistan, and even Libya — contributed to “alliance fatigue”.

The Iraq and Afghanistan campaigns were essentially disasters for the West at a grand strategic level, despite the fact that not a battle was lost, nor a city abandoned in the face of fire. The USSR, too, did not lose any ground in its own Afghan War, but neither did it advance its grand strategic posture, nor stave off the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The West, at the end of its wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Libya, have enhanced neither Western security, economic or political interests, and nor can the outcomes in those states be said to be markedly more in Western interests than the *status quo ante*. And yet Western treasuries, and their treasury of public trust and mutual loyalty, can not easily be rebuilt. If Washington again asks its allies to “go to the well for it”, will they do so with such open heart and purses? It is hardly likely, unless an existential threat arises. And terrorism — absent the surrender of an entire society — is not an existential threat, despite the fear and panic which politicians and the media engender. That is not to say, however, that vital wars or slow, grinding engagements, will not be held in the future, and that the lessons of counter-insurgency should be ignored.

But to properly address the conduct of forces if they are to achieve their mission and strategic objectives on tomorrow’s battlefield, the entire question of military doctrine must be re-considered. As this writer, among others, has noted: major defense platforms can remain in service a half-century or longer, but military doctrine only creep-

ingly transforms over a century or more. But the psychological interdependency between doctrine and technology means that operations continue to function, in many instances, at a level of near-lunacy. We can discuss, shortly, the continued — and clinically insane — reliance on giant diesel-driven reverse-osmosis (RO) water purification units (ROPUs), which essentially have tied down Western logistics and approaches to military operations at forward operating bases (FOBs).

This consumes vast amounts of diesel (budget), transportation (budget), manpower (budget), and flexibility of operations (mission success). And yet the process is more passionately defended than the passion for battleships and manned fighter aircraft.

As with the whole macro-process of logistics and alliance-building, the evolution of technological and doctrinal commonality at a military level is pervasive and, as it has become rigid, the most resistant element of defense forces to change. Moreover, the process is driven by the “politically-correct” adherence to an orthodoxy in intelligence perspectives and threat appreciations. What becomes clear, particularly as alliance and doctrine orthodoxy becomes paramount, is that no amount of real intelligence can overturn belief in the kind of self-serving intelligence appreciations which come from analysis undertaken close to the seats of policy.

In other words, policy officials will base their decisions and budgets on assessments written as a result of an unholy and close partnership between those who have a vested interest in a local political-military agenda rather than rely on irrefutable and hard intelligence from the field.

Thus equipment purchase decisions and operational doctrine become distorted from reality. The logistical and doctrinal paths of Western powers, which began to develop

around the start of World War II to meet existential threats, gradually evolved into a bureaucratically-consistent *process*. Finally, it became merely a pattern, a life form, evolving for its own sake, and hardly at all in response to need or threat. Change becomes almost impossible, unless it is forced upon the system.

We looked at this process when evaluating the failure to understand essential elements of the battlefield caused the US to go, literally, in the wrong direction on military vehicle procurement in 2007-08 in the Iraq War. We harkened back to the parallel of how the British lost the Revolutionary War in the American colonies, but ultimately defeated France at sea due to the very delayed realization as to how scurvy could be defeated.³⁸ By being the first to cure, and prevent, scurvy, the Royal Navy could sustain an effective fighting force at sea for longer periods than the French Navy.

By early 2011, it had become apparent that the logistical approach to Iraq and Afghanistan by the US had proven to be so financially expensive, and politically debilitating (and at huge cost to alliance trust) that any future US military engagements abroad would need to be on a very different basis indeed from those two strategic scenarios. And because of the potential for cyber warfare disruptive activities on large civilian, urban concentrations at home (which call for yet another form of logistical response, akin to handling the Japanese 2011 *tsunami* disaster, which we discussed earlier³⁹), forward (or expeditionary) campaigns would

38 Copley, Gregory R.: "For Want of a Nail ... Tactical successes or failures can often accumulate to determine strategic outcomes, but too often we ignore the linkages between tactics and strategy. A case study of US vehicles in Iraq." In *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 2/2008.

39 Copley, Gregory R.: "Lessons of the *Tsunami*: Strategic, political, and economic lessons can be drawn already from the March 2011 earthquake and *tsunami* which struck Japan". In *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 3/2011. That report, among other things, noted: "Ruggedized, highly-mobile, grid-independent, fossil fuel-independent electric power generation will become critical for warfighters and relief operations alike. This capability will need to be married closely to the provision of water purification/extraction systems which are also totally inde-

have to be conducted with greater care and discretion, and with maximum attention to rapid mission success in an arena which required equivalent attention to “hearts and minds” (psychological operations and what the US Army happily assigns to its Reserve forces as “civil-military affairs”)⁴⁰.

What became clear was that if the US and its allies were to become capable of rebuilding their strategic posture — and, indeed, their alliance — they would need to fight future wars in a way which (a) guaranteed rapid success, (b) minimized the overall campaign costs, and (c) preserved and enhanced the prestige and deterrent credibility of the states and their alliance at a grand strategy level. This, absolutely and *à priori*, means that there would need to be, when fighting wars at a theater level, a commitment to preventing: (i) defensive patterns of behavior and “system hardening” (aimed at minimizing battlefield casualties); (ii) related reliance on very rigid and strongly-defended lines of logistical support, which are enormously expensive and vulnerable and (iii) net-centric warfare in which theater decisions are made or constrained by a remote national headquarters.

To achieve this, at a very basic level, the logistical architecture and tactical operating doctrine require serious attention. The Russians have already addressed this: they lost all their structures and doctrine when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1990 and have begun, slowly, to develop new ones.

But the Western Alliance states cannot change so easily; they cannot abandon the enormous investment in infrastructure and technology without severe political and economic consequences. Unless there is a conscious process

pendent of fixed electrical power supplies or fuels which require heavy transportation.”

40 Again, refer to the *Defense & Foreign Affairs* study, “The New Rules of War: Fight Symmetrically, Stay Engaged, and Prioritize Timely Mission Success”, in *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 4/2011. *Op cit*.

and politically-endorsed path toward change.

That is not to say that change is absent, and that progress in military logistics is not being made in the West. But the changes are mostly incremental, tactical, and come at a time when the strategic architecture and the nature of conflict is changing in tectonic ways, and incremental responses may not be sufficient, even if the overall procurement and doctrinal development processes were not already locked into budget-draining and decades-long programs. Why worry about the life-cycle costs of a generator set when a fighter program is overrunning its budget by hundreds of billions of dollars?

But the reality is that absolutely fundamental change can occur quickly and economically. One step would be to say that diesel fuel volume use in any operational theater be cut by, say, 50 percent within one year. Because it is the transport of diesel fuel which causes one of the greatest vulnerabilities in modern military operations. This convoy mentality contributes dramatically to the defensive nature of the conduct of operations (apart from the media-driven sensitivities of modern urban societies). Those locked into the military system would argue that this kind of diesel use reduction is not possible. But we have to recognize that this pattern of diesel and petrol use has arisen literally within a century. It is not a law of nature.

By 2012, 38 percent of diesel use in US forward operating bases (FOBs) in Afghanistan went to fuel generators to create electricity. Much of that was to purify and heat water, as well as to provide lighting and computing power, and the like. All of that could now be supplanted by solar-driven, new-age battery-supported electrical power, especially when RO water purification is pushed aside to make way for the vastly superior and more cost-effective ultra-filtration of ground water. The International Strategic Studies

Association began undertaking studies into battlefield water and power at the beginning of 2011, with remarkable results, leading to the creation of revolutionary systems to deliver diesel-free, forward-deployed water purification.

Logisticians are paying attention to this. But can military doctrine at a squad, company, and battalion level keep up? Within the US Marine Corps, for example, because of the imprecise nature of old water purification approaches, a US Navy corpsman must use an antiquated and cumbersome testing procedure to validate that each batch of water being purified meets potable standards. This doctrinal commitment is in place, even though new ultra-filtration systems cannot even produce an outflow unless the water goes through a process which delivers water purified to 0.01 microns of purity: five times greater than the current standard required (that standard will soon be changed). Now, testing can be done with a \$35 pen-sized device. But doctrine says that a corpsman is required, so procurement cannot change until the doctrine does.⁴¹

That target reduction of 50 percent of the use of diesel fuel within a year could rise to perhaps 80 percent in short order, given that a reduction in the logistics train itself would automatically reduce manpower, diesel, and equipment requirements and costs. Transformations in operating doctrine, too, reducing reliance on “overwhelming firepower” in the form of strategic weapons in tactical situations would also reduce costs to the taxpayer, both financially and politically, and preserve strategic weapons for their principal purpose: deterrence and existential threat management.

We have just begun the debate on the rôle of logistics —

41 See also, Copley, Gregory R.: “The Legacy of Coalition Warfare: US Defense reorganization means major doctrinal re-thinking, not just for the US, but for its Allies. The debate now begins on how to get back to sustainable — politically and economically — warfighting doctrines after the strategic failure of ‘overwhelming wealth’. In *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, 1/2012.

macro and military — on the future of the West, and on the future of the global strategic architecture as a whole. But it seems almost impossible to provoke much response, other than a passionate defense of the *status quo* whenever change is suggested.

For the West, this could mean a defense of the *status quo* until decline makes the question moot.⁴²

If we look, then, at defense as being an integral — and not peripheral — part of a society, often determining state survival or competitiveness, then we must now return to the question of how we see our future, as a society.

42 An illuminating view of the interrelationships between military strategy and grand strategy can be found in the 2012 book by Robin Higham, *Two Roads to War: The French and British Air Arms from Versailles to Dunkirk*, published by the US Naval Institute Press. Among other things, he notes: “Grand strategy is a national policy that is politically, diplomatically, economically, socially, and militarily related to potential enemies, much less so to possible allies. The armed forces tailor themselves to meet grand strategic conditions with the monies allocated, which is almost never what is deemed necessary.” He also stated: “Grand strategy is a continuous policy plan that guides the national destiny. It has to take into account not only possible enemies and their strengths and weaknesses, but also the need for alliances and the assets and debits of such. ... [T]he makers of grand strategy have to consider, weigh, and plan to secure the nation’s resources at home and overseas. ... None of this can be done without intelligence (knowledge) and the means to bring it to the attention of decisionmakers.”

XXI

Having a Future in Mind

*When good men do nothing in times of evil
and need, they cease to be good men*

WHERE ARE WE GOING AS SOCIETIES? It is a question which we face each day, from within ourselves, and from others. The answer inevitably must be reduced to another question: Where do we wish to go? In times of great upheaval and change — times in which opportunities for extremism exist, and in which the needs of many are forgotten or become unrealized in the mêlée — the option to do nothing evaporates. To do nothing is to be subsumed. To do nothing is an abdication of responsibility to our innate commitment to the survival of the species.

It is only with the second question — where do we *wish* to go? — that individuals and societies begin the process of creating goals, and then grand strategies of complex objectives in terms of specifics of quantity and quality and time, and then the implementing strategies. I addressed this process more comprehensively in a study, *Australia 2050*, which appeared in 2007⁴³. It outlined the processes which a society must undergo to formulate that grand strategic

43 Copley, Gregory R. (Principal Author), with Andrew Pickford: *Australia 2050: An Examination of Australia's Condition, Outlook, and Options for the First Half of the 21st Century*. Melbourne, 2007: SidHarta Publishers.

framework of defining identity, values, goals, and methods. Of all these, identity is the most critical, because identity in many respects defines values and goals.

But what is of profound underlying importance is to begin the intellectual rigor of envisioning in detail a desirable future, so that it can be pursued. Where there are no goals, there is no leadership, no direction; no Victory or meaningful survival for a society.

Most individuals want no part of this existential debate; they are “good men” who do nothing. They are distracted by immediate challenges which consume them. The urgent overtakes the important. The result is a society of individuals who willingly enslave themselves rather than contemplate a life, and then act to realize that vision.

There are those who happily enslave their minds so that their bodies may be free. They follow without question the orders of a leader or the *diktat* of social rules so that they may receive the rewards of the flesh: food, shelter, security.

There are those who happily enslave their bodies so that their minds may be free. They will put their labor out to market to achieve the necessities of survival, but preserve their thoughts and counsel. They ponder and question, but do not act.

Of these, a free mind gives the greater richness, but often the least comfortable existence. But to be free and un-enslaved is to be led by no purpose. Thus to be free to envision a future and to act to achieve it is an enslavement of a different character; it is tied to a happy purpose; it is leadership. Even the leadership of a band of one.

Thomas Gray, in his *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, said that “paths of glory lead but to the grave”; that all striving is for naught; that nihilism prevails. That death in the end comes to all. But paths of glory still are paths of glory. And paths of ignominy, of selfishness, and ignorance

also lead but to the grave. The craven paths, indeed, lead to an earlier grave, and an unmarked one. It is true of individuals; it is true of nations.

Winston Churchill's memorable aphorism, "the farther back into history we look, the farther forward we can see", is a starting point of how we can see clearly the glorious paths and those that fail, but it can lead us to see the future as a linear extrapolation of the recent past. But seen in its broader context — with a longer view of history — we can see that human activity is only linear for short periods. Rather, history is more frequently *cyclical*, both over the short and long terms. And both the cycles and the bursts of linear direction are subject to the interference of other cyclical or linear trends which may have never before overlapped or coincided.

We have grown fat on the belief that humankind's progress is more or less linear; with the belief that knowledge will always grow; with the narcotic delusion that wealth's upward spiral will continue with only occasional punctuation from war and natural disaster. That may have been the view of many generations of the past millennium. Contented corpulence grows in a single generation, and can rot in its grave before the brief linear shooting star has expended its short life. This is not the perspective of the past two millennia. That timeline shows that the line becomes a circle; a cycle. The comfortably flat earth is but a broader, less immediately perceptible curve of an horizon.

It was in about 1965 that "Moore's Law" (after Intel Corporation co-founder Gordon E. Moore) was "discovered", averring that computing capacity — and therefore human progress — would double every two years because in each two-year span the number of transistors which could be placed on an integrated circuit would double. It implied a future without technological decline; a future which could

address most needs; man forever supreme. But it is not a “law”, neither manmade nor natural. It is, at best, an injunction: a goal; a standard which proves itself to be true only with the application of competitive creation. By virtue of human will. It takes a linearist approach to its most successful conclusion for as long as it can. But this — as linear trends always are — can only be short-term. Indeed, Moore himself predicted the trend would only continue for a decade. It lasted a half-century, but by the second decade of the 21st Century it was already slowing down.

When such a linear pattern of growth — in technology, economics, national success — is broken, does this necessarily precipitate a period of linear decline? And are such periods (and graph curve) of decline a reflection of how high the growth line (curve?) has climbed? The answer is that periods of decline are easier to trigger and more susceptible to acceleration because negative triggers (bad decisions, no decisions) are easier and more likely to occur. Growth is mostly a cohesive process of relative stability; decline is more often a process of instability and a collapse of cohesion. Decline, or a period of no growth, may therefore exist for longer periods because it is more difficult to arrest and reverse, and it presupposes — as a probable precursor to the decline itself — the loss of some or all of the knowledge or skills to arrest or remediate the decline.

Growth in knowledge, matched with the appropriate environment to transform knowledge into physical reality, is often more stable as a process than decline, and more difficult to initiate, because it requires that knowledge build upon knowledge without interruption, so that physical tools can be built upon tools without interruption. Those periods of great linear upward trends occur as a result of equally great leadership and cohesion: social, political, and military. They flourish, usually, with a blend of collegial ac-

tivity (such as cooperation and competition) and isolation (the freedom of individuals to think and act).

In contrast, increasing collectivism of thought acts as a negative spur — an impediment — to the creative adaptation of societies, and creative adaptation is the element which characterizes survivable and growing societies.

Interrupters — broad, oblique actions which affect the path of humanity: the warp *versus* the weft, except that the two paths collide rather than weave — can induce breaks in linear (and, to a degree, cyclical) trends, either upward or downward trends. We are presently witnessing great interrupter movements, which have ended the century or two of economic, population, and scientific growth. And the great interrupter has not been war. Wars, indeed, *spurred* much of the economic, scientific, and population growth of the past two centuries, and only some of the decline. The great interrupter which we see ending the historically brief line of growth we have enjoyed is the move from a risk-oriented society to a risk-averse (and therefore highly risky) social structure.

Significantly, we see linear declines commence with, and are compounded by, a loss of learning and knowledge. Learning, and therefore intellectual and tangible growth, increases through constant application and a rigid commitment to knowledge. Learning can be lost in a generation when the process is interrupted. Today, knowledge is revered less, replaced by belief.

Indeed, we have entered a period where we have created tools and social structures which enable many to neglect or forsake knowledge without apparent penalty, and to function on belief alone. Belief is not an axiomatic corollary of knowledge, nor a viable substitute for it. Indeed, it was the start of broad, knowledge-based education which created what we now call “the scientific method” to quantify, and

verify knowledge, and to proceed on the basis of empirical stepping stones of validated findings. This educational framework gradually replaced a belief-dominated age which, in the West, for example, was characterized by the dogma-driven Catholicism of the Middle Ages. Even Catholicism later found that it could adapt by absorbing and accepting the science-based world which temporarily put secularism ahead of religiously-dominated society.

This is not an even process. But, in broad terms, Western society has begun to revert to a belief-based society.

Belief-based societies — populated by those who enslave their minds or bodies — are more easily manipulable than those which have within them significant numbers of people who are owned only by a duty to think and act in accordance with their own conscience, driven by true knowledge.

If we are to ensure the existence of vibrant societies deep into the firmament of the future, then it is more important to *know* than to believe. Equally, it is important to know who we are; where we wish to go; and how we plan to get there. Grand strategy is based on knowledge. Know the world; know thyself; know that you will make plans — goals — which comprehend the terrain of uncertainties; and know that you will assemble the resources to achieve those goals. Knowledge and belief are of the mind, and they must remain there, in balance, but, indeed, in competition.

Even if we accept that we can master a view of the future, we have to consider that the changes emerging have about them the air of chaos. Is chaos something which *must* be? Indeed, perhaps we need to define what we even mean by “chaos”.

XXII

Is Chaos Necessary?

WE THINK OF CHAOS IN TERMS of unpredictability, randomness of behavior, uncertainty of outcome: loss of control. It is, however, in terms of human social organization, merely a transitional phase of life. What makes the present era so significant, however, is that we are viewing this transitional phase on a global scale, and it is because of its seeming universality that we wonder at outcomes and timescales.

When will we see a sense of stability and predictability in global structures and affairs, and in our own societies? In other words, when will this cratometamorphosis — this reorganization and transformation of society — reach a stable state?

In historical, social terms, what we call chaos is always leveling and horizontal; it tears down, or appears following the destruction of, vertical hierarchies. Did “globalization” and global forms of lateral communication destroy the structured world we knew in the 19th and 20th centuries? Or was global interaction and communication enabled because of the lateralization of access? The same question could have been asked after the globalization generated by the conquests of Genghis Khan and the Mongols in the 12th and 13th centuries.

Indeed, “chaos” — or what we call social chaos — could be defined merely by the lack of a defined order and leadership. Leadership is the cornerstone of order and therefore

hierarchy. So, if chaos is always leveling and horizontal, then its antidote, or response, is always the eventual, natural creation or restoration of vertical hierarchies. And both the leveling of chaos and the reactive creation of vertical structures of society can be populist phenomena. In order to achieve the communal cohesion required to both tear down or to build up, it is necessary to generate a dominance of populist unity of thought and action. This means the creation of “political correctness”: this is our urge to conform, and to be part of a mainstream.

The French Revolution and the Bonapartist empirism response was, taken as a set, an example of popular destruction — the introduction of chaos — and the predictably severe imposition of order as a response. So, too, were the examples of German social and political destruction which led to the end of World War I and the popular urge toward nazi repression in the 20th Century; the parallel collapse of the Russian Empire and the reactive imposition of Soviet draconianism; the collapse of the Chinese Imperial framework and the resultant civil war and imposition of a period of authoritarian communist centralism; and so on.

Once we see the pattern — action and reaction — then the process, in fact, looks less “chaotic”. And if we see the maturing and eventual decline of successful societies as part of the process, then we must also see the reorganization which follows their apogee as equally part of the process: the cratometamorphosis phase. This “chaos” rarely resembles anything like what scientists would address in “chaos theory”. The patterns of human social behavior, while avoiding formal structures during the chaos phase, in fact have fairly predictable patterns. Only by failing to understand social patterns of need do we prolong or exacerbate the chaos before a natural settlement of affairs works out. It is for that reason that the artificial imposition of

“peace” and “peacekeeping” often delay true conflict resolution for decades. The interruption of natural processes does not always lead to positive outcomes.

So it is *how* we manage the reorganization, or “chaos phase”, which determines how quickly, how well, and, indeed, how in fact we emerge as societies when hierarchies begin to reappear. As, of course, social structures did reappear across Central Asia following the scything hierarchical destructions of Genghis Khan, Alexander the Great’s conquests, and so on.

So it would appear in most instances that “chaos” or reorganization is a necessary part of the social adaptation of humanity to its own processes of birth, growth, maturity, and decline; and eventual re-birth. Must the “chaos phase” necessarily be violent, or destructive, as well as uncertain? Apparently not, although it is usually so. Much of the evolution of the growth phases of societies, of course, is gradual and manageable. Many other transitions, including movement from one phase to the next, can also be managed.

Australia, in the early 21st Century, began to lose direction as a society — it acquired a form of social randomness — as a direct result of its rising wealth. In other words, it began to seek some form of “reorganization” while it was still in the process of growth. The initial tendency appeared to favor a “democratic” leveling of existing hierarchies and a move toward egalitarian and leveling republicanism. But the sense of unease within the society led instead to a search for identity and the restoration or strengthening of traditional hierarchies expressed as a significant revival of support for the monarchy.

What is significant is that tendencies — such as changes of widespread societal expressions of mood, or impulses to destroy — can be quick to appear, but structural reorgani-

zations which lead to positive growth or social productivity take much longer to achieve. Indeed, attempts to forestall “revolution” and chaos by premature draconianism may, in fact, lead to a compounding of the destructive phase. Societies have to be ready for the change; they need to have reached the point where they yearn for a restoration of order, certainty, and security. Only then will they begin the path back toward hierarchical certainty and begin to build their identities based on the acceptance of the myths, epic sagas, histories, and beliefs of their being.

Things happen, for better and worse, when societies *believe*. Belief gives confidence and security. Religion — the principal type of societal belief — is not just, as Marx said, the opiate of the masses, it is the settling core of identity security. People *want* to believe. In that sense, belief enables a climate of achievement, but *knowledge* — the empirical accretion of facts — is then necessary to make the physical and intellectual tools, including societal infrastructure, which deliver the results which societies demand.

In part, the transition to a “chaos phase” happens when beliefs waver, for whatever reason, although often because the society’s success may have begun to falter, possibly through the maturation of the physical process. As we saw with Rome or Angkor. Crisis, including the angst of social chaos, causes people to turn to new beliefs — new “gods” in some senses — to have something to embrace; a place of calm in an uncertain world. We see the process in time-abbreviated microcosm in the way in which armies traditionally induct new recruits. They first must break down beliefs and innate patterns of behavior in order to then instill new beliefs and patterns necessary to survival and performance on the battlefield. Boot camps are a form of the creative destruction of individual minds so that they can be rebuilt along lines more responsive to group cohesion.

So it is with the chaos within societies and between societies. It is a necessary component to the re-adaptation of peoples to changing circumstances.

We know that both chaos and order in societies respond to how information is distributed, withheld, or managed. And, more than any other defining characteristic, it has been communications technology which dominated the first decade of the 21st Century. But communications *means and methods* are only part of the equation. What is it we are communicating? Are we becoming more, or less, capable of dealing with *information*? Are we on the road to becoming “content rich”, but information-deprived?

XXIII

What is the Information Model for the Coming “Age of Chaos”?

HOW SPECIES COMMUNICATE amongst themselves defines how well or poorly they organize their hierarchies for mutual protection and for all of the modalities of survival. Just as the chatter of baboons can prepare a troop of them to face danger, so, too, does the language — and the projection through communications technologies — of humans allow humanity to better cooperate. How, when, where, and what we communicate determines the path, efficiency, and efficacy of everything we do, and the shape of every unit and function of human society, from the family, to corporations, to government, religion, security, scientific and technological organization, education, and food production. Everything.

Human society has organized itself and flourished in direct proportion to its success in shaping and projecting language and iconic imagery to stimulate appropriate actions and reactions to threats and opportunities. We are in an age, however, when we have not only begun to neglect the *substance* of our language in favor of the media of conveying it, we have pointedly begun *regressing* in our understanding of context while we give all attention to the dazzling technology we have developed to convey messages.

Moreover, the technology has continued to evolve so rapidly that it has taken on the form of an entertainment in its own right. This has been a process which has evolved and flourished since cave paintings and tribal corroboree ceremonies, through the oratory of Athens and the plays and theater of Shakespeare. We have now become so enamored of the capabilities of our technology (or methodology) that we have, in today's age of gadgetry, to a large extent, forgotten the *purpose* of it. And we have taken for granted that this fragile capability, so dependent on a complex and finely-tuned framework of *cultural* cohesiveness, will withstand all social and economic vicissitudes.

We have i-pads; we are invincible! We have cellphones; we are omniscient! The more we talk, the less we say. The chattering of baboons has more meaning. Yet the *process* of communication itself seems to provide satisfaction, rather than the *content* of the communication.

Modern, urban societies have, in fact, become totally process-driven. We think in terms of continuum and expansion. Continuum becomes comfort and safety and meaning. We are process-driven. Marshall McLuhan, the Canadian academic, was ahead of his time — and ours — when he said in the early 1960s that, already, the medium had become the message. Storytellers, philosophers, politicians, and the like have become “writers”. The *methodology* of delivering words has become more important than the substance which those words were meant to convey. Writing is merely methodology; pen or computer merely technology. “Writing” is not a euphemism for thinking, or even for storytelling.

And the processes of information conveyance today are the driving technologies of the early 21st Century. More than that, these processes exemplify the ephemeral transiency of the messages. But perhaps most critically, these

processes are entirely governed by that minute-by-minute dependency we have on electrical power, a capability which is at the pinnacle of a long, complex, costly, and fragile “whole-of-society” process. Little wonder that modern societies are so preoccupied with process; it takes all of our attention to field and support the great technologies of communication.

When information technology — IT — becomes such a driver in all aspects of modern life, and when education and a broadly-based teaching of history in particular are reduced, little wonder that we have no ability to generate anything but noise to move through the wires and wirelessness of our technology. The technology itself compounds — by virtue of its mechanical nature in which symbolism replaces descriptiveness — a decline in literacy, and therefore literature. It is literacy which gives us the capacity to expound and expand conceptual thinking: to learn and build.

The immediacy of the emerging information technology capabilities, ironically so fecund with a potential to be able to deliver the beauty of the ages at the hint of a summoning, has become merely a circus act. A circus act because it focuses not on the message, but on the medium. And yet a circus act which *only* conjures its magic as long as the chain of energy supply — beginning, perhaps, at a storm-beset oil rig in the North Sea — continues unabated.

It is, as Oscar Wilde paralleled in his observation of Americans, akin to “knowing the price of everything, but the value of nothing”.

Despite this, there is a persistent belief that the information model for the remainder of the 21st Century would be an evolution — that linear extrapolation, once again — of the electronic Internet model which began in the 20th. It is clear, indeed, that we have not yet finished the linear (and therefore short-term) trend of compounded improve-

ments in computing and communications capabilities. But, as the history of cycles confirms, it is not something which can and will continue indefinitely. Already the “interrupters” — the economic, demographic, social, and conflict trends — are coming into confluence and threaten to disrupt the linear growth and viability of markets and capital formation. And these are two of the areas which drive and enable the continued evolution of technologies. As well, and related to these factors, the global power framework is concurrently transforming, and this, too, will drive new directions of demand in terms of computing and communications technologies, as will the ability deliver relative stability in the supply of electricity.

So let us assume that the current process of computing and communications technological growth will continue, perhaps with less pace and regularity, over the coming decade or two, or even three. And where energy supplies might, in general terms, suffer in terms of reliability (from infrastructural problems, sabotage, etc.), inhibiting stable economic growth in urban areas, there will be a compensatory improvement in the efficiency and reliability of light, portable, energy storage systems: batteries. This will compound the current trend, at least for a while, toward portable systems using wireless technologies, and encouraging the tendency to cryptic communications and toward more prosaic information storage. Already we see a decline in the popularity of printed books. Students read summaries and reviews of books, not the books themselves. At best, many students want to read only chapters of reference books, not the entire works.

The result is that we increasingly see “information” — or iconic grunts and stilted text-messages — out of context.

So what, then, will be the “information model” for the coming age of chaos; the interregnum?

It seems that the “information model” of the coming decades will in many respects parallel the situation at the end of the first decade of the 21st Century, but with some incremental changes in technology. Incremental — but still significant — technological transformation in some areas, given that research and development processes continue, albeit with reductions in funding and market conditions within view. The real issue will be how and where electronic systems, and particularly hyper-connectivity, are employed. In this regard, we see that the potential for great connectivity at lower prices will mean that poorer societies — those currently with limited infrastructure — may, in fact, see the most significant impact of the broader introduction of communications technologies.

But there are limiting factors.

One of the first limiting factors may well be the potential interruptions to electrical power availability. In other words, the universality of electronic communications — the globalization — will face interruptions. Global, horizontalizing communications, which had in the post-Cold War period leveled national governing vertical hierarchies, will shrink back to sporadic local pools. Today’s “Net-centric” thinking will begin to become patchy simply because electrical power and communications capabilities will suffer from interruptions due to budgetary issues. This will aid the natural re-birth of vertical hierarchies and the concurrent social regeneration.

The technologies of global communications will still be available for some people, but they will become less important as transforming economic and social issues make local issues more important. The existing technologies will find more immediate uses.

We need only look at much of Africa in the early 21st Century. Decaying terrestrial infrastructure failed to cope

with changing population patterns and declining and corrupted economic conditions. As a result, new technologies, such as cellphones and satellite-delivered radio and television, took root because they were more flexible and affordable. But as economies transform, some societies will not be able to afford to replace the ageing and dying satellite systems which represent the core of current information technology hubs. We envisaged, when the world fielded the first supersonic transport aircraft, the *Concorde*, that it would presage an age of continuing improvements in air travel speed and capability. But that is not what happened. Economics and politics intervened, and that technological breakthrough languished. Who expected that the United States would see an end to a spectacular era of space travel when the last Shuttle transporter was grounded in 2011? The *Concorde* and Shuttle eras ended because of conscious and deliberate decisions which changed the paths of human progress.

So we must expect economics and politics to play a rôle in whether — or for how long — we will see a continued expansion of the network and capabilities of satellites facilitating human communication.

It is clear that we can expect a continuation of some aspects of technological growth over the coming decades, but in the same apogee — in the curve — of growth and interruption which we will see with global population and economic trends over the same timeframe. The main areas of significance will be in the creation of energy storage and energy capture. These growing capabilities will, to some extent, free communications from the necessity to be part of a complex network of terrestrial electrical power networks, with all their vulnerability. The hallmark of the next generation of systems and networks will be their sustainable, independent nature, separate from fixed infrastructure, and

this will be a tribute to the emerging generation of battery and (mainly) solar power capture which began to show its real promise in 2011 after years of seemingly plodding progress.

It will be the major economic dislocations which will shake the major urban, Western populations from their fixation with the entertainment and social prestige (fashion) aspects of communications technologies. Summoning up paid employment will, for many people, begin to look more meaningful than summoning up a thousand websites or television channels.

At this point, the resurgence of societies and their systems — including their military capabilities — will depend on whether urban societies, the main centers of technology fixation, re-orient toward the substance of messages rather than focusing almost solely on the means of communicating them.

But will we have to write off a generation of Western humanity, crippled by an entitlement mentality, before we build a new generation of people eager to work, to learn, and to achieve? It is an existential challenge which alone forces us to think about substance. As Dr Samuel Johnson noted in 1777, according to his biographer, James Boswell: “Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully.”

XXIV

Renewal and Revival: A New World

LEAVES STILL UNFURL SHYLY INTO optimistic Spring in the manicured parks which spell the glory of the city. Tranquil suburban Sunday mornings whisper again the rightness of the world. Surely nothing can disturb the ordered passage of life. The chapters of our recent discussion must have been but a noisome dream. The distant cannon choir but a Summer storm beyond the horizon.

It is human to deny the possibility of impending, dramatic change, even as it occurs. The world of the early 21st Century was faced with the evidence of the profound transformation experienced in the 1990-2010 period, a shift which was still gathering momentum into the second decade of the century. It is easier for us to blot out any true study and understanding of history than to accept that change is underway. But we know this of ourselves. Calm is preserved by the illusion of control. Even better, calm is possible when to the illusion we add a measure of true control.

Forgive me; I do not mean to intrude, but there are fundamental questions which stare at us, even as we continue the endless and comforting gavotte of daily life and the immediate politics and economic issues.

Perhaps this is the time, before we embark on questions of the future, to ask another question about our present

condition: Are we, as human society, getting what we deserve, what we need, what we could have?

Some, in living memory, achieved for us all a peace which was abundant and full of promise. Wealth began to push through the retreating snows, with the color and hope of Spring. But the leaders of the generation which brought this miracle were exhausted after the decades of ingenuity and toil, and they retired or died, believing their work done.

They did not know, neither did they have remaining the reserves of strength, to recognize that the peace they had achieved was transient. Truly great wars expunge the vanquished, and exhaust the victor. What was unique in the recent peace, or the conclusion of the Cold War, was that — unapparent at the time in all its aspects — it was a peace and victory for all parties.

But as with normal conflict, the party psychologically defeated learned the lessons of the struggle; the party which assumed itself victorious learned little or nothing.

The victorious leaders had reached for the beauty, wealth, and security of peace, and believed that it was a goal which, at the end of the journey, could allow them rest, and which could sustain them and their heirs forever. They had achieved an end to the great competition of superpowers, without destruction. They had achieved the opposite of what the British chieftain Calgacus had said, memorialized by Tacitus: *solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant* (they make a desert, and call it peace).

Indeed, they had made a garden, and departed. Their children, or those who grew vapid in the cities where concept and dialectics prevail over the mechanics of survival, thought the garden — the paradise — their due, and devoured the wealth as though it were a “peace dividend” of infinite supply, and an entitlement in perpetuity.

As with all delusional and isolated societies — or societ-

ies which become deluded because of the isolation, and wealth is a form of isolation which grows in proportion to its success — new hierarchies and beliefs arise. They inevitably have, because they are isolated from contextual reality, little to do with the true needs of societal survival. All external lessons are feared and attacked; all history regarded with suspicion.

Two things derive from this.

The first is that urban-dominated societies are — because of the lack of the need for the truly interactive personal cooperation of agrarian communities — the essence of isolated thinking. Political fashion, or political “correctness” arises, based not on cooperative production but on mutual demands; on mob rule, and this places the wrong people — people who promise the mob what it wants — in power. This is called *kakistocracy*: governance by the worst elements of society, or those elements which are worst fitted to govern for the long-term good and security. This is reinforced by:

The second factor, *mumpsimus* — adherence to beliefs proven unreasonable or incorrect — is the hallmark of detached, wealthy societies.

The global community is undergoing massive upheaval, and the wealth is being shaken to the point where mumpsimus itself is being overturned as the warm beliefs of wishful thinking meet the *schwerpunkt* — the spearpoint — of challenge. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the twin delusions: that power and wealth can never be challenged; and that the wealth and time of the modern world is being usefully spent by the notion of countering “human-caused” climate change.

The threat to wealth has shaken the foundations of support for the new religion of human-caused climate change, and the sacrifices which must be made to appease Ra, the

god of climate change. It is now so increasingly evident that the “climate change” political correctness has no scientific foundation whatsoever. That is not to say that climate has not always evolved; it has. Or that human activity can damage the very atmosphere in which we must live. The answer is to understand and cope with it. However, global climate is not undergoing the changes ascribed by the politically-correct urban mobs.

It is time to recall the words of George Orwell: “In a time of deceit telling the truth is a revolutionary act.” [And perhaps another of his remarks: “Political language is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind.”]

Thus, strategic victory will accrue to the governments which absolutely abandon immediately and without precondition or apology the notion of obeisance to the “climate change” *diktat* of the jumbly masses. The People’s Republic of China made this break, and even by early 2010 had begun to successfully use the political missteps by US President Barack Obama to get back to business and to keep the world out of China’s internal affairs. The PRC will prosper, strategically and economically, from this break. It was a break which actually placed the PRC on its road to strategic leadership, and, for the PRC, it might have saved its unity and economic strength.

Western societies, still under the grip of the wintry populism of the media, remain wary of tackling the rabid vitriol of the mob. But nowhere is this obeisance and populist opportunism more evident than in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Even little New Zealand, which could be forgiven for thinking in isolation (as it has done in the past) because it really is isolated, has declared the King — or, rather, the God, Ra — to be without clothes, and has begun moving back on the path of bal-

anced political and social life.

The leaderships of the US, UK, and Australia have remained — despite the increasing opposition from many of their populations — mumpsimus either out of genuine stupidity or out of the cunning belief that their embrace of the religion of climate change (and related populisms) would sustain their voter base in the immediate term. They do not think beyond that. The strategic decline of the US, UK, and Australia and others will be in direct relationship to the persistence of their leaderships in maintaining belief-driven policies in defiance of reality. This cynicism, which places political power above the long-term good of society, then makes these leaders the exemplars of kakistocracy.

We must be clear: belief is not knowledge. We must be firm: belief is not morality or ethics. Morality and ethics derive from experience-based *knowledge* of what works to ensure the survival and good order of society. Morality and ethics, which determine national character, are the result of proven aspects of behavior. They are not beliefs which are unsustained by the rigor of human experience.

So, then, let us address some questions which link our past with our future:

1. If the Westphalian nation-state has reached its peak, what would replace it? We have come to crave definition, clarity, and specifics, but the reality is that the global structure of the early 21st Century still contains the DNA — even the visible and linguistic characteristics — of truly ancient societies. We see, for example, in the city name of Paris the indelible echo of the Parisi tribe of Goidelic Celts who, along with the Brythonic Celts, migrated Westward in family groups over many years of pre-Christian times, some perhaps originating from homelands East of the Caspian Sea in Central Asia. How

they arrived on the shores of the Caspian we still do not know, and why they migrated Westward is not told to us. Celtic bloodlines also reach into the Horn of Africa and sub-Saharan Africa, as they do into Central and Western Eurasia. The Celts reached up into the Eastern British Isles, in what is now England and Scotland, and their cultural characteristics infused with local, and other migratory, tribes.

We see the residual characteristics of ancient tribes in the sense of identity and habits of many modern nation-states. We see some of the ancient nation-states and empires imprinted on their modern namesakes: Greece, Rome, Britain, China, Egypt, and so on. But even those few icons have transformed the nature of their “legal entities” over the centuries.

At its core, the relationship of people to geography — geopolitics — creates the nation-state. The “nation” of people — like the migratory Celts — may be mobile; the geography, however, remains constant. Only when people identify with each other and with their immediate geography do we see the phenomenon arise of the “nation-state”. The Westphalian Peace of 1648 began to codify that geopolitical entity in terms which were mutually recognized by a number of such gatherings. This was a diplomatic means to minimize conflict.

What we have seen, then, in the subsequent three-and-a-half centuries, has been the success and evolution of a statist philosophy on these terms. The evolutionary process of this “macro-ideology” of statism allowed for subsidiary models which adopted various forms of democracy, autocracy, and absolutism. The key to the evolution of the Westphalian model was the mutual acceptance by each entity of the norms of transaction between them, ranging from diplomatic interaction to currency

and trade modalities, and latterly the processes of electronic interaction. Forms of interaction have always existed between “state” entities. There is increasing evidence of historical diplomatic processes of interaction between the Australian aboriginal nations — each, although nomadic to varying degrees, with territorial boundaries to their societies, making them *de facto* nation-states — going back into the mists (the dream-time, perhaps) of their 40,000 to 60,000 years of presence on the continent which has very recently come to be known as “Australia”.

What makes us, then, think that the systems which evolved from the natural human approaches to societal interaction into a codified “Westphalian system”, are now at their peak and ready for collapse?

Part of our willingness to dispense with a formula which has been evolving from natural instincts over the entire life of our species has been, once again, caused by a general unwillingness to look at history and at how societies develop and function. Social structures, geopolitical structures, and all other intellectual and physical tools are the product of development, one step at a time. We have, in this book, called the process “tool-building”, and the current success and wealth of global society has led us to think of our current capabilities as innate and irreversible. We have, as a result, developed a process which has allowed the great urban-dominated states to dictate how Westphalian nation-states should surrender part or all of their sovereignty to an amorphous global framework called “international law”.

As we have seen, however, the current wave of economic uncertainty, coupled with changing ground truths (such as population levels and population movements), is leading toward the dislocation of many societ-

ies. If, as we have outlined, we see a return to nationalism as a reaction to the crises and changes, then “international law” will be meaningless. Indeed, it could be argued that it is already meaningless other than as a means for the imposition of the rules of rich states on those states which cannot resist the power centers.

Perhaps, then, what we will see is a *reversion* to — rather than an abandonment of — the classically-defined Westphalian nation-state, or something which would be recognizable as such. Indeed, we could argue that the post-Cold War world already destroyed the sovereign functions of nation-states by furthering the 1945 United Nations vision of a global collective governance system. The urbanized, intellectually-driven (as opposed to practically-driven) creation of a totally abstract vision of “international law” in the 1990-2012 (and continuing) period actually killed the nation-state, or severely wounded it. So a reversion to “Westphalianism” would in fact bring societies back to forms which evolved organically and in accordance with human nature, with appropriate deference to geographic and resource balance.

Regardless of the urban drift, we will still see people identifying with geography, and defining their collective being through a name which describes that geopolitical entity. *Terroir* defines us. How well or badly they fare will depend on how they gather to a common purpose, with the efficiency of a common language and set of beliefs and ideals.

What we may have seen, then, is not the end of Westphalianism — which, anyway, merely gave a snapshot codification of a natural human process of supertribalism and geographic identity — but merely an end to some of the states within our current global assembly

of nation-states. States come and go. Cratogenesis and cratometamorphosis are merely part of the life-cycle of man writ large. Societies spill their DNA into the genetic river of history, and parts of it survive: names, ideas, myths. What modern states today have emerged from the Roman Empire, from the British Empire, the Russian and Soviet empires, the Mongol Empire? What states have vanished with the ramparts of Uruk, yet what parts of them live on in some sense of our own societies?

2. Is democracy still feasible? Some ideologically-driven models of democracy may pass away, but democracy cannot perish because it is an inherent form of human behavior. It is part of the social interaction which trades rights for collective action. Wolves hunt in packs for this same reason. Democracy was not a human *invention*; it is innate. The ancient Greeks gave the phenomenon a name (from the Greek *démokratía* “rule of the people”, which derived from *dêmos* (“people”) and *kratos* “power”, around the fourth and fifth centuries BCE), and therefore began the process of *codifying* what is essentially an innate extension of our logic of survival. It is equally important to understand that logic varies according to circumstance — context, both geographic and social — and is not universal in its nature. So “democracy”, then, is not only still feasible, it is unavoidable and infinitely variable according to location and culture.

No-one, in other words, has a monopoly on “democracy”, although each society tends to view its own as being the most desirable. Democracy is not the face of a political party or a voting system. These are but transitory tools of our expression of will. If we rule out much of the modern insistence that democracy equates solely to republicanism, or constitutionalism, or freedom, or any other specific form of lifestyle, then it is clear that de-

mocracy remains untouched by ephemeral ideologies or organizational modes. Democracy, in its innate form, is part of the social interaction through which people assign certain aspects of their individual control over their lives to another person, persons, or institutions, with the understanding that such assignment is revocable. It is the differences in the processes and degrees of this assignment and revocation of individual control over life which cause competition between societies.

- 3. Is a new “Dark Age” likely, and, if so, how would it manifest itself?** The human ability for destruction and chaos, borne out of fear, has been demonstrated considerably through history. The economic and strategic decline of the US, or even “the West”, does not necessarily signify the arrival of a new “Dark Age”, however. Still, it is clear that many societies will enter a period of declining fortunes, both economic and with regards to their ability to impose their will on others. That new states should surge ahead as the societies in which education, progress, and wealth repose should be sufficient impetus to the US and Western societies to steel themselves to make the sacrifices necessary for their own re-birth. We saw, from 2009 to 2012, however, that the narcoleptic peoples of Greece could not bring themselves to any real sacrifice or re-invention to ensure their own survival. Why should we expect better of the rest of Europe or North America or Australasia?

On the other hand, we saw the rise and fall of great powers over the past millennium: the Netherlands, Spain, Britain, and France. What did their decline from supremacy mean? In many instances it did not even mean a reduction in the relative standard of living of their populations. What the decline of power did mean for those nation-state/empires was a reduction in con-

trol over their own destiny, implying a greater reliance on treaties and coalitions. Their priorities thus, to greater or lesser degrees, eventually came to be dictated — in the late 20th Century, at least — by the leader of their *bloc*, the United States. One key result was that they fought wars based on Washington's priorities; they shaped their defenses to integrate with those of the US; and — perhaps most critically — they shaped their societies to conform with the economic abstracts (not the fundamentals) of the US, in terms of post-industrial priorities.

Indeed, for many decades, the decline of power was not all that painful for them. But it had — this morphine-controlled easing into death — its consequences. Similarly, the economic decline of the US may not be painful in the way in which total civil war can be painful, but, on the other hand, we cannot rule out that the decline of “the West” will not include instances of internecine conflict. To put it more bluntly: we cannot be sure that the West will *not* enter a “new Dark Age”; we cannot be certain that *the entire world* will not enter a period equivalent to the medieval and pre-medieval Dark Ages or the Greek Dark Ages (c 1100 BC–750 BCE), of which we know even less.

What renders the situation less than predictable is the degree to which the global population decline and global population movement trends interact with economic decline, the loss of trust in instruments which transcend single societies (ie: models of diplomatic norms, mutual acceptability of currencies, etc.), and scientific and technological progress. We do not know, for example, which societies will be able to sustain viable — that is, balanced — nation-states which can weather the storm and also sustain a vibrant fashion of scientific enquiry.

The modern Dark Ages which endured, arguably, for

at least five centuries after the fall of Rome, from 500 to 1000 CE (and by some estimates lasting longer), were not all “dark” in that they were totally bereft of progress or prosperity. But they did represent a period in which scientific progress and global interaction were more limited than in later years. Learning, in both the East and the West, fell into very limited domains; in the West it came to be the province of the Catholic Church, and it was used as a weapon, in many respects, to sustain the Church’s control. The advent of moveable type, by Johann Gutenberg, in 1450, put an end to that dominance, and began the great era of human excitement with learning and knowledge.

Which gets us to the next question:

4. Can the level of human learning ever be lost? Learning has been constantly lost, and humanity set back, through many means over the millennia. We are only now beginning to learn some of the lessons from the ancient Egyptian, Chinese, or Minoan civilizations, or from the approaches of early Peruvian civilizations, and so on, through a painstaking “reading of the tea-leaves” of archaeological clues. The burning of the Library of Alexandria was a bonfire to warn us of the dangers of the failure to have “back-up copies” of our great records of human achievement. Those European Dark Ages highlighted how civilizational contraction and the collapse of empire can also bring about a loss of records, and a decline in a general understanding of learning.

We now face a combination of an equivalent of the fire at the great Library of Alexandria and the collapse of Rome (and the start of the Dark Ages). We can already see how physical libraries, and even bookstores, are disappearing from landscapes around the world. We can also see how electronically-stored data is fragile and vul-

nerable to loss — like (and including) photographs fading in an attic, or motion pictures and videos disappearing from their media — and how changes in technological standards render older files and storage systems unreadable within a few years of their adoption. But more importantly, we see the reality that what we think of today as information or “knowledge” is a commodity which is entirely dependent on electricity — and usually a constant and ready supply of electricity — for its survival, its accessibility, and its distribution.

We dealt, in Chapter XIV (“Urban Man” is Now “Energy Man”), with the knife-edge dependency of urban society on the constant supply of electricity. It was also apparent, with the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the US, that considerable data, critical to ongoing business, was lost with the collapse of the World Trade Center towers in New York. The lessons of that day stimulated a better devotion to off-site data storage by companies and governments, but even that approach was a tactical step in the process of sustaining information — learning — in a meaningful, long-term fashion.

Absent electricity, the memories of the modern world are lost.

A paperless world, then, could be a memoryless world.

But it is not merely in the area of stored knowledge — whether in books or files or databanks — which is in jeopardy. The urbanization of society has led to disconnects in both family and employment structures. Skills and family knowledge, and therefore critical questions as to identity, are not being so readily handed down from parents to children. All children, throughout history, question the importance of the stories of their parents, but the importance of family unity to survival or prosperity ensured that examples, lessons, values, and a sense

of identity were indeed transmitted down the years, both from families and from the traditional employment skills which fitted tradesman with apprentice, professional with an articulated clerk. That is, until the advent of late 20th Century and early 21st Century wealthy, urban societies.

This new environment created disconnects, both with regard to family linkages and to employment traditions. Few people under the age of 30 today in the Western world could describe the trades or professions of their grandparents. This is not the case in more balanced and traditional societies.

So, to answer the question of whether learning can be lost, we need to see that it is being lost every day; it is the wastage of the collective of human brain cells. And it is the product of our approach to socialization.

So, Where From Here?

Where, then, do we go with all of these questions, and others?

If there is comfort to be had, it is in knowing that, to understand where we are going, we cannot be distracted by things which are essentially transitory in nature, or which ultimately will be less than decisive. Some trends over which we agonize today are already set on a scale which we can only hope to guide, but not fundamentally alter. What is, is. Do we worry whether Iran will acquire nuclear weapons? She already had some externally-acquired weapons for more than a decade by the time this book was written. So what? Will they mean anything in the grand strategic scheme of things? This is not a black-and-white, existential question, not for humanity, not for “the West”, not even for Israel. But we crave simplicity, and immediacy, and the importance of now.

If we are indeed to look at the bigger, longer-term out-

look for humanity, then we cannot be drawn into the short-term issues to the extent where they cloud our ability to see that broader context. We cannot keep allowing “the urgent to overtake the important”. That, as we once would have said, would be to debate how many angels could dance on the head of a pin. As if, today, we believed in angels, or knew what a pin was. So, perhaps: how many climate change experts can dance on a microchip?

No: let us debate something important. We have the opportunity. We are at the edge of a new age, waiting to be shaped. Everything is in the balance: the sum of human learning; the pace and direction of the tools we conceive to assist us; the very numbers of humans who will dwell on the planet; the progress or retrogression of social formations to cope with rises and falls in population, or which respond to these shifts. We are witnessing the cratometamorphosis — if not the cratocide — of whole human civilizations. Not just Western civilization. We will emerge from this process still recognizable as human societies, built around the fundamental imperative that we must reproduce to survive as a species, and that this will govern our behavior and organizational approaches in the face of challenges.

We will, as threats arise, become clannish and violent and intolerant of outsiders, or open and expansive as cooperation suits us. We will, as we have already done on countless occasions, forget the things our ancestors learned, and pay a price for that. We will, when prudence takes us, secrete away our learning and keep flames burning in sacred places. Some of us will guard it all, and find a leader and a path through the processes of change. That option is open to us all.

But, for a period, and for the most part, our civilizations will become less than civilized. Uncivilizations. And be as bedouin wandering among the ruins of Baalbeck.

Tomorrow, then, we shall begin once more to gather the fragmentary manuscripts and marvel at the ancients. We shall find grace in reverencing true learning, not realizing that it was from this that we allowed ourselves to be distracted. So much will have been lost, and chips and drives and memory cards will await decryption: silicon Rosetta Stones awaiting a divine spark.

And we will start upon the path of re-civilizing.

We are at the pivotal point of a long epoch.

XXV

The World at a Pivotal Point

WE HAVE SEEN THAT OUR TRANSFORMATION has not occurred overnight. The great surges in population numbers and wealth have been building steadily since the Industrial Revolution, and then began to grow dramatically at the end of World War II. We should have been better prepared for this, and would have been, had we studied the way in which societies — like all living bodies — mature and age, and die. But we scarcely even noticed the tidal wave of population growth which reached *tsunami* proportions after World War II. It was all growth, and all growth was considered good.

It was the vigor of youth. And all youth considers itself immortal.

Now, in 2012, Europe is at a pivotal point. Or, rather, it is at a point where its structural transformation can no longer be ignored. The rest of the world, too, is at a turning point. But events in Europe finally led us to the *dénouement* of the 20th Century. In other words, the 20th Century began to end as a phenomenon a decade after the calendar had pronounced its passing.

The changes underway by 2012 seemed to presage a new Europe tied more firmly into the Eurasian heartland than old Europe. It spelled the end — 'though not without economic, social, and political pain — of the 20th Century

form of Atlanticism.

Similarly, the United States and much of the West is at a pivotal point, except that — by almost all public reaction — this reality *can* be, and *is* being, ignored. Within the morphing of the US, as it sidestepped the question of its own strategic pivot (and the signs of its own strategic mortality), Washington — like Europe — began to walk away from the 20th Century form of Atlanticism, in favor of a Pacific orientation (but a Pacific orientation which continues to remain ignorant of the reality that it is the *Indian* Ocean which is the new dynamic).

The Presidential elections in France on May 6, 2012, and Parliamentary elections in Greece on the same day — each overturning the *status quo* — brought some aspects of the European “crisis” back into international debate.

There was at that point no visual evidence of a bloody revolution in Europe, or the US, or elsewhere in the greater West, which would be an iconic representation of the massive transformation from one day to the next. The process of change is more gradual; more evolutionary than revolutionary. It is nonetheless profound. The election in 2012 of a doctrinaire socialist, François Holland, to the French Presidency would not appear at first to yield dramatic change. Neither did the election of a doctrinaire socialist to the US Presidency when Barack Obama took office. And Holland knew that, however much he wished to appease his electorate by offering to extend the benefits of government employment, he had little room for maneuver within the German-dominated eurozone. If anything, the removal of Nicolas Sarkozy as French President placed Germany even more at the center, and in control, of European continental power.

Arguably, by 2012, the European Union had become Germany. And Germany, which wished this outcome above

all else because it has seen it as an alternative to a fratricidal, war-torn Europe, then has to accept that a high level of structural inefficiencies in most eurozone member states degrades the average economic performance of the whole. Even so, it gives Germany, essentially, a massive market and manpower base.

So now, whatever President Holland might do to cause France to retreat somewhat from eurozone *diktat*, Europe — let me reiterate — had become Germany. How long it would remain thus is still open to question.

This structural shift, with Continental Europe turning eastward and the US turning Westward (with both actually gazing across the world to East Asia), held some interesting ramifications for the continued viability of 20th Century alliances and even terms such as “Westernism” and “Easternism”. North Atlantic states, such as the United Kingdom and, to a degree, Canada, and some of those European littoral states clinging to “Westernism”, would need to look to their futures and decide how to ensure them. The UK, already facing a breakdown in internal sovereignty or cohesion as a unitary state, would have to consider whether it wishes to once again become a major state in its own right (and therefore resist the fissiparous tendencies of the Celts), or whether it will be content to be essentially a city-state built around the markets of London. [The Scottish local council elections, giving great impetus to the secessionist Scottish National Party, on May 3, 2012, were a significant indicator of the UK’s coming difficulties.]

What had become clear was that the present Government of the US had — as I write this in July 2012 — walked away from Western Europe, and the German-led eurozone now turns its attentions toward its major trading partners across the continent: the Russian Federation, with its control of oil and gas; and the People’s Republic of China

(PRC), with its markets. Clearly, if history is any guide, Russia and the PRC would ultimately come to compete with Germany's manufacturing. Eventually, restiveness within Europe — by such as the Greeks, Italians, and other “Mediterranee” — may stir rebellion against Berlin. But for the time being German-led Europe is looking East, and Russia and the PRC are happy to oblige.

Washington, meanwhile, plays with new clothes for what it still supposed to be its quiescent pet, Turkey, failing to recognize that Turkey was neither stable nor obedient to the US. Nor would it, or could it, give Washington what it desired in the Middle East or the Muslim world. When the Balfour Declaration was announced in 1919, one European Jew was heard to remark to another: “If Britain wanted to give us a land it did not own, why didn't it give us Switzerland?” Similarly, Ankara cannot give Washington — even if it wished — something it doesn't own: the Arab world, the Maghreb, or Central Asia. So Washington toys with Ankara, and fawns to the radical Islamist Muslim Brothers (the *Ikhwan*), deceiving itself into believing itself still to be a player, if it ever was, in “the Great Game”.

In all of this, Russia, once again with Vladimir Putin in the Presidency as of May 6, 2012, had some advantages. As we discussed earlier [Chapter XX: Can the “Supply Chain” Save Civilization], Russia was able to begin building a new state when the USSR collapsed to rubble in 1990. It could reinvent itself, and was by 2012 pushing to reinvigorate its manufacturing sector, so that it is not merely a font of oil and gas for Western Europe. Germany's success post-World War II was also that it could rise from the ashes, unencumbered by the bureaucratic sclerosis of the past. Why should Australia, once a great manufacturing nation, not resume such a direction, instead of descending to become a Third World source of raw materials for the PRC? Because, as

with much of Europe and the US, Australia lacked the great blessing of a traumatic collapse. And government *spending*, rather than the stimulation of private investment, remains the focus.

But the frustrations of societies mount in Europe and the US, over *bureaucracies* which rule undemocratically, and which extort “electorates” to pay for governmental glut-tony. In Italy, indeed, they wonder why the world has ignored the coup which replaced their elected government, and which threatens to drive away all investment and prosperity.

This is a new world.

*The Worldly Hope men set their Hearts upon
Turns Ashes — or it prospers; and anon,
Like Snow upon the Desert's dusty Face
Lighting a little Hour or two — is gone.*

— The 14th Quatrain of the translation by Edward FitzGerald of
The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám

XXVI

Epilogue: Empires, as Snow Upon the Desert, Melt Away

RARELY DO WE KNOW THE HOUR OF OUR DEATH, or the method of it, but we know that some things are inevitable. And in all things we seek to project our life onto a larger stage; to imbue it with endurance beyond the corporeal being through acts of greatness or seeming permanence, or through the procreation of our bloodline.

We cheat death through our children, through the endurance of our works, and through membership in something — a society — greater than ourselves. Thus we endure.

Still our endeavors falter, at some stage, and disintegrate. Still, we know and hope, that even if our individual lives at some stage slow and end, our societies can perhaps linger, even grow in virility, to provide the framework of safety and dominance for our offspring. We have faith that, even with the certainty of our own passing, we are part of a greater continuum. But history shows that societies — cultures, nations, and civilizations — and bloodlines, and entire species, mutate, falter, and are supplanted.

Every society in history except the ones which now exist have already died, or have morphed through conquest and subsumation beyond recognition. Our societies, too, must

face the fate of historical evolution. How quickly does this process move? We have seen the gradual and stately decline of the relative power and cultural influence of the societies of the past few thousand years occur — in many instances — almost painlessly. The Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Persia, Rome, the Mongol Empire, the United Kingdom; nation-parts of past or current civilizations: all are reduced, yet all linger comfortably, in some form of retirement.

One great factor in the usurpation of empires and societies is that each is overtaken by another, even when most decline at their own hand. Despite the works of Spengler, Edward Gibbon — *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* — and other great historians, it is a process we still do not understand, nor even choose to understand. We each prefer to think of ourselves as exceptional, and unbound by the lessons of history. We each think that we alone are chosen to prosper, to overcome, and to succeed when others have failed.

Nothing is foretold. We *can* break from many of the paths of history; and we can determine our own fates as societies. But first we must understand that deep history of humanity and nature. And then we must *understand* that others, too, choose to do what humankind — and all of nature — chooses to do: to compete for survival. To reach for the sun.

Even knowing that this is our task, we look at history and at the context of the competition for dominance through lenses and mirrors which distort reality and give us the perspectives we find most palatable. Indeed, the limitations of our individual experiences constrain our very field of vision. We cannot see far beyond the horizons of our experience. This is exactly — in this twilight of what we presently think of as Western civilization — as Spengler forecast: that we would forget how we, as a society, struggled to create and understand the intellectual tools we now take for

granted; how we employ and depend on tools, the foundation of which we cannot today even comprehend.

How, then, can we have the omnipotence necessary to make decisions infallibly? Despite this, we cheat and manage the inevitability of the normal life-cycles of human life and societies, and extend our average life expectancy. Thus we toy with the reinvigoration of the viability of societies and states. This means that the decline of the West is no more inevitable in the near term than the rise of the People's Republic of China, the two great trends forecast at the dawn of 2012. The fate of these societies is within the grasp of themselves, and, in theory, can be addressed.

What is clear is that the most successful component of competition among societies — wisdom borne of experience, coupled with sound and comprehensive intelligence and analysis — can neither come from narrowly-focused individuals, nor from systems which constrain freedom of expression or action. Despite this, in the current angry debate in Washington over “who lost America”, it is postulated that, again, “war and strategy are too important to be left to the generals” *versus* “strategy and national management is something which should be in the hands of military officers”. What has happened, in reality, in the West, is that a political class has developed, in which individuals spend their entire lives within the political and bureaucratic processes (essentially urban concentrations), and lack experience of the world and the mechanisms of *real* life, in which things are grown, reaped and processed, and in which goods are devised, manufactured, and sold. The profit and loss of real life. And others spend all their lives as professional soldiers, lacking all experience — like the politicians — of the real world of survival. [Somewhere in the middle of these camps lies a fallow ground of a non-governmental “service sector”, in which private corporations feed by in-

terfacing between government and the productive sectors. They are merely an extension of the public trough.]

The reality is neither with one nor the other side of this debate; neither the governmental structures nor the military. Both, in today's world, lack the fortitude and morality to meet a payroll, and to survive on the food — the edibles, literally — which they put on the table. What the West has lost is the perspective that the individual who must lead cannot be a product of a system which demeans individual responsibility or demeans the gaining of experience based on practical life. True leadership can be neither the product of collective thinking, nor the product of someone fed at the public trough. Great leadership has *always* come from a sense of *noblesse oblige*, and begs the question whether the provision of salaries and benefits for politicians is actually in the public interest. It also highlights the proportionately greater contribution to security by citizen soldiers — militia, in the old parlance — as opposed to lifetime career soldiers, even though the latter zealously guard their élite status. *Nothing* transcends experience borne of individual responsibility.

The West's success has funded a vast public trough which constrains the emergence of individual thought and experience, and therefore the wisdom which can give charisma and capability to true leadership. "Democracy" becomes, then, a system which now often suppresses individual freedom and curiosity, and champions collectivism.

The question, then, is whether the individualism which placed freedom at the core of those modern democratic experiments which began some three centuries ago can be reignited, and the vast, unproductive collective be swept aside. But even this may be a meaningless preoccupation with our immediate condition, like rearranging the deck chairs on the *Titanic* after it has struck the iceberg.

Can we begin anew? And what would this mean, to “begin anew”? Can we make our societies and our civilization work again?

Can we, in fact, make that transition which marks the epochal end of “civilization” and revert to the balanced and creative cultures and societies on which civility was built and on which humanity thrived? We have conditioned ourselves to think that “civilization” was the pinnacle of all human accomplishment — perhaps it is, but it depends on how you envision human needs and desires, and how you name and measure those desires — rather than merely an organic phase in the the pulsating cycles of lives of our species. We have taken the “civilizational” value — or concept of modern civilization — that we are compelled as a species to “expand” in all material and spatial contexts. We became obsessed, as all civilizations become, with control: we named, numbered, quantified, and defined, and painted a world in our image. But unlike the beautiful lemming — which knows not the name humans have given it, nor pretends at control — we find that control is elusive; that nature has its own pace, patterns, and spans.

So, can we begin anew?

We already have.

We have begun to revert to a belief-based society, rather than a quantifiable one. This we cannot see as “good” or “bad”; those judgments stem from the bias of our own separate cultures. But human numbers are entering a period, once again, of decline. We will begin to think in a revived æsthetic of balance with our *terroir*, because, as the peoples of the Roman Empire discovered at empire’s end, there will be no alternative.

In time, new golden ages of creativity will dawn, and the fires of our recent achievements will continue, in any event, to throw light and warmth.

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This book is itself part of an evolutionary process, and therefore all those who have helped me to arrive at this point have contributed to this work. But they cannot be held accountable for how I may have internalized the lessons they taught me. Primary among my teachers were my

parents, to whom I have humbly dedicated this volume. But in every such work I must pay homage to my late partner and teacher, Dr Stefan Possony, one of who's rivals called him merely "the greatest strategic philosopher of the 20th Century", when all who knew him also knew that he was far more than that. Every day I salute you, Steve, and your brilliant wife, Regina, who subordinated her own great talent to ensure that yours would have wings, as my wife did for me.

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So, to all of those who entrusted me with your teaching and argument, I am your grateful servant.

— GC, *August 2012*

Author's Note on "UnCivilization"

I have explored many of the themes in this book in the pages of my publication, *Defense & Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy*, and in the pages of the collaborative book we published in 2011, *Energy Security 2.0*. I have brought some of those writings, albeit modified and supplemented from their original format, into this book because they represent a key part of the development of the philosophies which I have attempted to communicate here. As well, I hope that this volume is a logical — but stand-alone — successor to *The Art of Victory*, the research for which provided a springboard for this volume. I cannot apologize for the complexity of the topics addressed in these writings, however. Indeed, rather than attempting to bring events into stark clarity, I can only say that if the reader comprehensively understands the state of the world, then perhaps I have not made myself clear! But I thank you for joining me in exploring the uncertainties.

— Gregory Copley, Beaulieu-sur-Mer, August 2012

The Author

Gregory Copley, an Australian, born in Perth, Western Australia, in 1946, serves as an adviser on strategic issues to a number of governments and leaders. He is Editor-in-Chief of *Defense & Foreign Affairs* publications, and Director of Intelligence at the Global Information System (GIS), an on-line, encrypted-access, global intelligence service which provides strategic current intelligence to governments. He is President of the International Strategic Studies Association (ISSA), based near Washington, DC. He has authored or co-authored more than 30 books, and several thousand articles, papers, and lectures on strategic issues, history, and other topics. His recent books include *The Art of Victory* (Simon & Schuster's Threshold Editions, New York), and others listed elsewhere in this volume. He has received a number of orders and decorations from governments, including, in 2007, being made a Member of the Order of Australia for his contributions to the international community in the field of strategic analysis.