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CIVILITY

THE MARTIAL ART OF
POLITICAL HEROISM
DAVID M. ABSHIRE &
CHRISTOPHER O. HOWARD

CSPC
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CIVILITY:
THE MARTIAL ART OF POLITICAL HEROISM

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David M. Abshire and Christopher O. Howard

With the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities

Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress
2013

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PREFACE

HEROIC LEADERSHIP IN POLITICS: CIVILITY AS A MARTIAL ART?

Human-nature will not change. In any future great national trial, compared with the men of this, we shall have as weak, and as strong; as silly and as wise; as bad and as good. Let us, therefore, study the incidents of this, as philosophy to learn wisdom from, and none of them as wrongs to be revenged.

– Abraham Lincoln, November 10, 1864, in response to his reelection¹

When schoolchildren are introduced to George Washington as America’s Great Heroic Leader, he is usually mounted on a white steed, saber glinting in the sun, not sitting silently in a large chair, presiding over speeches and debate. But both images are accurate. Washington’s leadership of the Constitutional Convention was no less heroic, no less courageous nor selfless, and no less critical to the survival of the United States, than his leadership of the Continental Army. George Washington, heroic political leader, had the same character, integrity, and skill as George Washington, Revolutionary War Hero. He was the same person.

Where weapons are the tools of war and the martial artists who wage it, the tools of political conflict are civility, compromise, and rhetoric. But civility in political battle is more than just a metaphorical saber. As practiced by Washington and many of his successors, the martial art of civility was not merely a means to victory, but to crafting win-win outcomes, the ultimate higher ground.

It would be a mistake to water down civility by defining it as nothing more than being nice, or associating civility and compromise with appeasement, as infamously characterized by Neville Chamberlain’s disastrous Munich Appeasement in 1938. On the contrary, civility is a powerful weapon in the arsenal of democracy. Like other, more traditional “arts” of Mars (the Roman god of war), civility is a multidimensional process. It has the same mutually agreed upon rules and limitations governing its practice. It is thrust and parry, strategic discipline, misdirection, and tactical accommodation. As Os Guinness put in *The Case for Civility*, “Civility is not for wimps; it is competitive.... Important political differences have to be ‘fought out’ in the public square.”²

This monograph examines the use of civility as a martial art by several heroic American political leaders. This group – George Washington, Henry Clay, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Ronald Reagan – each displayed a special form of leadership of great relevance to us today. They practiced civility – respect, listening, and compromise – as a martial art in their political battles. They wielded these weapons just as military leaders employ their own weapons in battle, to gain the higher ground. But in politics, higher ground is the ability to achieve what otherwise would be seemingly impossible. America

was born in what is sometimes called the Age of Reason, and the triumph of Reason – over instinct, emotion, tradition, and fear – is the ultimate objective of civility employed as a martial art. Thus, a martial civility is the employment of reason in building trust, discussing points of view, persuading, concluding, and achieving success.

The chapters that follow explore issues that were addressed at 2011 seminar on civility and compromise convened by the Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress with a grant from the National Endowment of the Humanities, and this monograph is the product of a follow-on NEH grant. The conference considered four threats to the survival of the United States in its first century, looked at three extraordinary Americans, and examined episodes of heroic leadership which stand up well against the greatest in history. The results shine new light on these events, the leaders who shaped them, and the nature of heroic political leadership. In the face of political crisis so dire as to threaten the Union, each of these leaders showed that civility can be practiced as martial art, compromise in search of higher ground can be mightier than the sword, and those who use them for rhetorical combat in service of the Republic can be Heroic Leaders. This insight offers lessons that apply today and will continue to inform political debate into the future.

Heroic leadership through civility and compromise is not unique to America, but the critical role it has played in the creation, development, and defense of America is exceptional. No sooner than it was born than the United States nearly died because of political pressure opposed to central government authority. For decades afterward, it struggled to survive the political schism over the inhumanity of slavery. Then, following its war against itself, it faced a political threat to union nearly as dangerous as the military threat had been. In response to these crises, the nation found singular leaders, armed only with their intelligence, experience, and civility. The heroism of their accomplishments is in no way diminished by the civility of their actions.

America's greatest heroic leader, George Washington, was also its first master at using civility and compromise to move to higher ground. He was a martial hero, in the best traditional sense, but even as a military leader, his most important contributions were not on the battlefield. He won the War for Independence by raising the army, holding it together across years of struggle and misery, keeping alive faith in the ultimate goal, and demanding both Congress and the army keep their commitments to the other and honor civilian authority. As first among equals in an exceptional group of political leaders, he remained steadfast in his civility and devotion to the country. These values inspired the "Miracle in Philadelphia." They informed his virtual invention of the U.S. Presidency.

Henry Clay fought his war against England in 1812 from the Speaker's Chair in the U.S. House of Representatives. After that misadventure, he devoted the rest of his long and storied career to keeping the Union together. A paragon of civility in the decades when America went from the "Era of Good Feelings" to gunplay in the well of the U.S. Senate, Clay may be the single American most responsible for saving the Republic from itself. For more than forty years after the threat of secession and Civil War was first bandied in Congress, the Union held together thanks to Clay's heroic leadership and mastery of compromise.

Like Clay, Abraham Lincoln was no soldier. He was, however, a Commander-in-Chief, leading the Republic through its bloodiest experience and keeping it together. But the nation he addressed at the start of his second term as President was no Union. The North was war-weary, impoverished, and angry. The South was conquered territory, bitter and resentful, kept in check only by an army of occupation. From what Theodore Roosevelt later would call the Bully Pulpit, Lincoln answered the new call to heroic leadership. He preached civility, forgiveness, understanding, and compromise.

With Lincoln's death, the first era of heroic American leadership ended as well. In the shadow of the Civil War, his entreaties were rejected by the Radical Republicans and the bitterness of internecine conflict infected the nation. For the rest of the 19th century, and the first few decades of the 20th, civility in American politics and the art of compromise to achieve higher ground were largely absent. Few national leaders offer a better example of what this cost the nation than President Woodrow Wilson. While his efforts to win The Great War and secure The Great Peace are now well-regarded by history, it is his objectives and the rhetoric that actually garner the praise, not his actions.

In 1917, understanding that a sustainable peace was needed, Wilson convened what is known as the Committee of Inquiry, a small group of brilliant young thinkers who assessed the geopolitical situation and sought to craft a long peace after so much carnage. This led to the famous 14 Points, which inspired the world with the promise of a just and lasting peace. When it came time to turn the rhetoric into something real, however, Wilson failed tragically, neglecting the principles of civility in his efforts to win the peace. First, he refused to take the Republican leaders of the Senate with him to the Paris Peace Conference, despite needing their support for whatever he signed. Then, instead of playing hardball with his allies and hewing to all his commitments, he traded away his goodwill and leverage to French President Georges Clemenceau and British Prime Minister Lloyd George for their support of the League of Nations. The result was a vindictive, unworkable peace.

Civility, practiced as a martial art of politics, is give and take, offer and compromise, but standing firm on core values and commitments. Wilson failed at the art of compromise. Then he compounded his failure by making the same mistakes when he returned to Washington. He failed to create a civil dialogue with his Republican opposition in the Senate. Instead of engaging the Senate Republicans he had already rejected and angered, Wilson told the Senate that the failure to pass the flawed treaty would "break the heart of the world" and undermine America's international standing. His own heart was the one that was broken, and he soon suffered a devastating stroke. Everyone felt betrayed by the harsh peace which tragically helped fuel the rise of Hitler and contributed to the causes of the Second World War.

In striking contrast to Wilson's tragic failure, our WWII and Cold War Presidents had magnificent successes. Roosevelt studied and learned from Wilson's errors, and in 1938, executed a strategic political pivot as great as any since Lincoln's. He told Harry Hopkins he was shifting from the partisan New Deal political strategy to an effort to unify and mobilize bipartisan support to defeat Hitler. He brought in former New Deal adversaries to set up the

economic and industrial infrastructure the country would need to win a world war. He reached across party lines to form a “war cabinet” 18 months before Pearl Harbor. All of this united the internationalists, regardless of party affiliation, and started the critical process of isolating the isolationists. By the time the Japanese attacked, the nation was relatively well-prepared – on higher ground achieved through civility and compromise.

After victory was achieved, the nation turned to its greatest war leader to lead it back into peace and prosperity. Dwight Eisenhower was a throwback. Like America’s Founders, he studied the Western Canon: the ancient Hebrews; the Athenians, who in their narratives wrestled with the fatal flaws of heroes and the weaknesses of unchecked democracy; the Romans who sought checks and balances within their Republic; the High Middle Ages and its sense of community; the Renaissance; and the Enlightenment and its advances in government, science, and invention. Like the Founders, Eisenhower was aware of the past and sought to build on it. What he built was the sustainable strategic and economic strength that eventually won the Cold War.

At the helm for that “perfect victory,” won without ever firing a shot, was Ronald Reagan. I was privileged to serve President Reagan as NATO Ambassador and later as Special Counselor at the White House. I saw firsthand not only the key role of Reagan’s civility in his successes, but the way he used civility to gain strategic advantage and to raise the game of all those around him. When sizing up Gorbachev at Geneva in 1984, Reagan understood what no one else had yet seen, “This man is looking for a way out.” Reagan pivoted, turning away from his well-deserved reputation as an uncompromising hardliner to embrace a path to peace and give Gorbachev the support he needed. It was not a simple process, but it worked, because Reagan’s personal character was the very definition of robust civility in the political arena: listen, build trust, collaborate, compromise, and follow through.

¹Roy P. Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. 8 (New Brunswick, New Jersey: 1953) accessed via <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/l/lincoln/>, 102.

²Os Guinness, *The Case for Civility, and Why Our Future Depends on It* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 152.

INTRODUCTION

THE INDISPENSABLE MAN

No morn ever dawned more favorably than ours did; and no day was ever more clouded than the present! Wisdom, and good examples are necessary at this time to rescue the political machine from the impending storm.

– *George Washington to James Madison,
November 5, 1786*³

The clouds darkening George Washington's days at Mount Vernon were cast by the Articles of Confederation. After winning the War of Independence, the Founders established a national government that was little more than a council of thirteen independent, sovereign states.⁴ In the absence of a strong, centralized government, states created policies based on self-interest, ignored federal treaties, imposed taxes and tariffs on each other, and issued their own currencies. The result was a weak and feckless nation, vulnerable to internal conflicts and exposed to external threats. In his authoritative work, *The Critical Period of American History*, historian John Fiske called this period the most dangerous in the nation's history.⁵

With its survival in question, the young nation looked to its greatest leader. Answering his country's call for the third time in his career, General George Washington left his saber behind at Mount Vernon. The political danger was as grave as any military threat Washington had faced, and his leadership in this critical period was no less exceptional than it had been during the Revolutionary War. In the face of a political threat, civility and the willingness to compromise might appear to be signs of weakness, but in the hands of great leaders, they become the tools of heroic leadership.

Fearing imminent collapse of the nation, Washington sought "to avert the humiliating and contemptible figure we are about to make on the annals of mankind."⁶ James Madison agreed that "if the present paroxysm of our affairs [is] to be totally neglected, our case may become desperate."⁷ As the strongest advocate for change, Madison saw the absence of national limits on state sovereignty as a threat to "the American Revolution's fundamental and radical goal of creating lasting republican forms of government, chosen by and accountable to the 'people' in a hostile world of monarchies."⁸ If left with such a weak government, the American experiment would surely fail.

In response to this crisis, twelve states sent representatives to Philadelphia. In 1786, James Madison led the Virginia Legislature to invite all the states to Annapolis, Maryland, to discuss ways to reduce interstate conflict. The "commissioners" at the Annapolis Convention of September 1786 called for a "Grand Convention" of all the States to meet to discuss how to improve the Articles of Confederation.⁹ They wanted a new Constitutional Convention that would, as Madison put it, "decide forever the fate of republican government."¹⁰

Grand purpose only brought about a poor start. With some delegates delayed by bad weather, a smaller initial group met in Carpenters Hall, the upper room of the State House in Philadelphia. There, for two weeks, the mood was sour. The group was unable to raise a quorum. Quite suddenly, to the sounds of trumpets and shouts, there was great hope. The discouraged ones could “see with their own eyes that General Washington had come to do his duty.”¹¹ Thus, on May 25, 1787, 29 delegates came together to establish the standing rules and orders of the Convention and to select George Washington to be its President.

It is traditional, even cliché, for leaders to make a point of demonstrating how bold and daring they are. Washington, however, commanded respect not by ostentatious thunder but with a quiet strength. “[He] sat on a raised platform; in a large, carved, high-backed chair, from which his commanding figure and dignified bearing exerted a potent influence on the assembly.”¹² He had an almost contradictory set of characteristics that set him apart from his peers and enhanced his magnetism. In an age of shorter men, the graceful and muscular Washington, looming over six feet tall, was not only respected and admired, but actually and appropriately feared by some. He combined deference with confidence, claiming himself to be “not worthy” of this latest trust and honor, as he previously had upon his appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army.

With his love of the theater, Washington was conscious of playing his part regally. He assumed such a role as an extraordinary actor in the theater of America, and of the world. Never was his awesome bearing illustrated in a more imposing manner than when an exasperated Gilbert Stuart, the portrait painter, once tried to put Washington at ease: “Now, sir, you must let me forget that you are General Washington and that I am Stuart, the painter.” Coolly, Washington replied, “Mr. Stuart need never feel the need of forgetting who he is, or who General Washington is.” As historian Gordon Wood observed, “No wonder the portraits look stiff.”¹³

The further great genius of George Washington was that he was not a genius at all. Franklin, Hamilton, Jefferson, and Madison all had streaks of true genius. They possessed great intellects and education from such places as William & Mary, Princeton, and Columbia. Largely self-educated, Washington did not attempt to compete with these intellectual giants. From his raised chair he rarely spoke. That did not mean he was not in charge – he merely presided, his presence keeping the order and discipline needed for the task at hand.

The most amazing part of the “The Miracle of Philadelphia” was that none of the delegates thought the document was all that good. It was thought to be simply the best they could manage under the circumstances. No one got everything he wanted. There was also a “pact with the devil” on slavery, with the hope that agrarian economics would erode the practice over time. The final genius was that the Constitution could be amended. It had legs. The Constitution would be a living document in which whatever might prove wrong could later be put right.

All knew that the fatal flaw of the Articles of Confederation was the lack of a strong chief executive. At the Constitutional Convention, many delegates remained uneasy about creating a

presidency which could produce a tyrant not unlike Britain's King George III. "But the convention had resisted these warnings and had gone on to make the new chief executive so strong, so kinglike, precisely because the delegates expected George Washington to be the first President."¹⁴ As the recipient of the huge grant of power under Article II of the Constitution, George Washington's integrity became his greatest strength. He had the virtue of already being a latter-day Cincinnatus. He perfectly fitted the model of the Roman Consul who saved the Republic in war and then gave up power, opting not to become a Caesar. After the Revolutionary War was won, Washington had the opportunity to lead a military coup. Instead, he deftly defused a potential mutiny and, refusing to take power for himself, secured the authority of the Continental Congress. He then retired as General of the Army and went home to Mount Vernon.

The story of King George III and the American portrait painter Benjamin West is true if almost fabled. When West painted George III, the King asked "whether Washington would be head of the army or head of state when the war ended. When West replied that Washington's sole ambition was to return to his estate, the thunderstruck king declared, 'If he does that, he will be the greatest man in the world.'"¹⁵

George Washington embodied public virtue. This was the quality that all the Founders admired most from the study of Greeks and Romans. John Adams may have expressed these feelings best when writing about the necessity of public virtue in securing a stable republic:

Republican governments could be supported only "by pure Religion or Austere Morals. Public Virtue cannot exist in a Nation without private, and public Virtue is the only Foundation of Republics. There must be a positive Passion for the public good, the public Interest, Honour, Power, and Glory, established in the Minds of the People, or there can be no Republican Government, *nor any real liberty*."¹⁶

The Education of George Washington

George Washington's leadership qualities did not all come naturally. His character, civility, and self-control were honed by self-development, tempered by reflection, improved by failure and misadventure, and strengthened by the setbacks and comebacks of his early career.

This is contrary to Parson Weems' apocryphal story of a six-year old boy born perfect, unable to lie about chopping down his father's cherry tree. In part, Weems was offering a counterpoint to what former Librarian of Congress, Daniel J. Boorstin, called "the publishing catastrophe of the age," Chief Justice John Marshall's multi-volume, so-called "official" life of the age. John Adams labeled it "a mausoleum, 100 feet square at the base and 200 feet high," and Boorstin called it "dull, laborious, rambling and second hand."¹⁷ Weems, an Anglican clergyman turned book seller, went to the opposite extreme, creating a myth for the ages, and selling 50,000 copies of his book to a young nation in search of its founding heroes.

As a schoolboy, Washington transcribed the 110 maxims of the *Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation*. “If thoroughly heeded, *The Rules of Civility* would have produced a cool, pragmatic, and very controlled young man with genteel manners – exactly the social façade Washington wished to project to conceal the welter of stormy emotions inside him.”¹⁸ Yet, it would take many years for Washington to embrace these rules completely and achieve the self-control that made him the silent but powerful leader he was to become.

Through the marriage of his older half-brother Lawrence in 1743, young Washington became associated with the wealthy and prominent Fairfax family. The Fairfaxes took an active role in promoting Washington’s education and career, and Colonel William Fairfax became his mentor. Under the Colonel’s tutelage, the teenage Washington learned to practice civility as a would-be Virginia gentleman and read such literary works as Julius Caesar’s *Commentaries* and Plutarch’s *The Life of Alexander the Great*. Nevertheless, Washington always remained conscious that he was not quite “one of them,” and developed a notably angry and egotistical side to his personality. Frustrated, Colonel Fairfax once wrote Washington’s mother, “I wish I could say he governs his temper.”¹⁹

Lawrence and Fairfax thought a career in the Royal Navy would suit Washington, but his mother found out and vetoed the plan. Instead, at 17, Washington embarked on a career as a surveyor for the Fairfax holdings. He found immediate success with his unmatched precision. Not only did he survey large tracts of Fairfax land in the Shenandoah Valley, but also what today makes up Old Town Alexandria, Virginia.

The Young Officer

Washington’s public career began taking shape when at age 20, the ambitious youth lobbied for and was awarded a commission as a major in the colonial reserve army. At this time conflict was already brewing between the British and the French over their competing claims to the Ohio Country (present day western Pennsylvania and Ohio). After leading a successful mission to deliver an official warning to the French forces establishing forts in the area, then-Major Washington convinced his superiors to make him a lieutenant colonel. Washington then pushed hard to be appointed to lead an expedition to establish a fort at the Forks of the Ohio River (present day Pittsburgh). He soon found himself in one of the earliest skirmishes of a worldwide conflict that the American Colonies came to know as the French and Indian War. After this first experience with combat, the cocky twenty-one-year-old wrote his brother, “I can with truth assure you, I heard the bullets whistle, and believe me, there was something charming in the sound.”²⁰

The ambitious young officer was so proud of his accomplishments that he soon overstepped his position. He entered into a fiery correspondence with Robert Dinwiddie, Virginia’s Lieutenant Governor. He complained that he and his fellow soldiers did not receive pay, rights, or respect equal to those of the British regulars. Unhappy with the responses, Washington let his temper fly. He replied to Dinwiddie in scathing language and continually requested that he be allowed to serve without pay rather than receive inferior wages. But as the

saying goes, pride cometh before the fall. The next lesson of Washington's military career was also his greatest setback.

On an expedition into Ohio Country, Washington and his men came across a French military encampment and launched a surprise attack, killing an officer the French later labeled a diplomat (and therefore a non-combatant whose life should have been safe). Forced to prepare for a counterattack, Washington put his four hundred men to work building "Fort Necessity," a small stockade surrounded by trenches. It was inadequate to its task. Expecting the inevitable battle to occur in the adjacent field, Washington built it "in a natural bowl commanded by wooded hillsides, perfect cover for attackers."²¹

To his surprise, the French and Indian forces engaged in what was then called "irregular warfare." With a thunderstorm raging and Fort Necessity's trenches overflowing, Washington and his men took continuous fire from an invisible enemy hiding in the trees. Washington lost more than one hundred men while the French suffered only three dead. On the Fourth of July, 1754, the future founder of our Republic surrendered with the pomp and ceremony befitting his rank. But there was no pomp in England, where he was deemed a disgrace to the British Empire and an example of the inferiority of colonial officers.

This defeat and humiliation was a critical turning point in the development of Washington's character. Moving away from ego and self-promotion, he began to embody the values he had learned as a youth, embracing civility, listening as much as talking, developing the skills of compromise, and placing the cause before himself.

When the British sent Regular Army troops to attack the French, Washington served as a volunteer aide to Major General Edward Braddock and learned a valuable lesson about leadership and command. Braddock was a veteran of the Coldstream Guards and an expert at European-style, close-order warfare. He "was hot-headed and blustery, was blunt to the point of rudeness, and issued orders without first seeking proper advice."²² Washington had learned the new tactics of irregular warfare employed by the French and Indians and tried to warn Braddock, but "[he had] learned his trade on the battlefields of Europe, and he'd learned it well – *too* well. Honorable men weren't savages. They had always fought in the open, in close order."²³

Unwilling to listen to Washington, a stubborn Braddock suffered a brutal defeat. The panic-stricken Red Coats were routed. Almost three-quarters of the officers were killed and Braddock himself was mortally wounded. The command structure collapsed. Despite having two horses shot out from under him, Colonel Washington took command. With the group was young doctor, James Craddock, who wrote "I expected every moment to see him fall. His duty and station exposed him to every danger. Nothing but the superintending care of Providence could have saved him from the fate of all around him."²⁴ Washington's stature and reputation were greatly enhanced throughout the Colonies and even in Europe. He was the only military man who gained from the battle. "A minister spoke for many when he noted that God had saved 'that heroic youth' because one day he would do 'some important service [for] his country.'²⁵

As a Brigade Commander during a later offensive, Washington was one of three officers assigned to lead an attack on Fort Duquesne, the French stronghold at present-day Pittsburgh. As luck and setbacks would have it, Washington was involved in another misadventure when Virginians fired mistakenly on other Virginians. Washington was devastated and learned another important lesson about overconfidence. As he later wrote, “Human affairs are always checkered, and vicissitudes in this life are rather to be expected than wondered at.”²⁶

With his brilliant wartime reputation, Washington put the French and Indian War behind him. He devoted himself to Mount Vernon and his duties as an elected member of the Virginia House of Burgesses. He successfully courted Martha Dandridge Custis, the wealthiest widow in Virginia. He inherited full possession of Mount Vernon on the death of his half-brother’s widow and inherited other possessions of his wife’s family as well. If Washington had worried previously about not quite achieving the status of the Fairfaxes, he had now arrived at the height of Virginia Planter society. “Once he married, an air of contentment settled over Washington’s restless life. He hoped ‘to find more happiness in retirement than I ever experienced amid a wide and bustling life.’”²⁷ Little did he know that he would yet be thrice called to heroic leadership in service to his country.

³ “George Washington to James Madison Jr., November 5, 1786.” *The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799*. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor. The George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress, 1741-1799. <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mgw:@field%28DOCID+@lit%28gw290030%29%29>.

⁴ “Each state retains its sovereignty, freedom, and independence, and every power, jurisdiction, and right, which is not by this Confederation expressly delegated to the United States.” Articles of Confederation, Art. II.

⁵ John Fiske, *The Critical Period of American History: 1783-1789* (Boston & New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Company, 1888).

⁶ George Washington, “George Washington to David Humphreys, 26 December 1786,” *The Papers*, Confederation Series, <http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/constitution/1784/humphreys1.html>.

⁷ James Madison, “Letter to James Monroe, March 19, 1786,” The Online Library of Liberty, *The Writings*, vol. 2 (1783-1787).

⁸ James Madison, Edward John Larson and Michael Winship, *The Constitutional Convention: A Narrative History from the Notes of James Madison* (New York: Modern Library, 2005), 16.

⁹ Annapolis Convention Resolution, September, 1786, *President George Washington World Press*, <http://presidentgeorgewashington.files.wordpress.com/2010/03/annapoliisconventionreport.jpg>.

¹⁰ Max Farrand, *The Fathers of the Constitution: A Chronicle of the Establishment of the Union* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), 108.

¹¹ Clinton Rossiter, *1787: The Grand Convention*, (New York: The MacMillan Company 1966), 79.

¹² Max Farrand, *The Fathers of the Constitution: A Chronicle of the Establishment of the Union* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), 100-111.

¹³ Gordon S. Wood. *Revolutionary Characters: What Made the Founders Different* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006), 42.

¹⁴ Wood, 49.

¹⁵ Chernow, 414 and 454.

¹⁶Forrest McDonald, *Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution* (Lawrence, Kansas: The University Press of Kansas, 1985), 71.

¹⁷ Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Americans: The National Experience* (New York: Random House, 1962), 342-343.

¹⁸Chernow, 14.

¹⁹Chernow, 17

²⁰George Washington, quoted in Chernow, 44.

²¹Albert Marrin. *Struggle for a Continent: The French and Indian Wars 1690-1760* (New York: Athenum, 1987), 85.

²²Chernow, 54.

²³Marrin, 97.

²⁴Chernow, 59.

²⁵ Marrin, 101.

²⁶Chernow, 90-91.

²⁷Chernow, 99.

THE LEGACY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON

No judgment was ever sounder... Perhaps the strongest feature in his character was prudence, never acting until every circumstance, every consideration, was maturely weighed... His integrity was most pure, his justice the most inflexible I have ever known, no motives of interest or consanguinity, of friendship or hatred, being able to bias his decision.

– Thomas Jefferson²⁸

On July 9, 1776, General George Washington was in command of the Continental Army at his headquarters in New York City when he received his copy of the Declaration of Independence. He had it read aloud from the balcony of the City Hall at the foot of Broadway, as a crowd gathered to hear the reasoning and rationale for war with England.

The Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution are the two defining documents of the American experience and two of the most influential documents ever written. In the annals of mankind, they documents represent higher ground. They are the embodiment and the result of civility and compromise in political discourse. Washington did not write either of them, but in a sense, he was the man who made them possible. His example is woven into them.

The Declaration is both a great moment in the English tradition of political thought, and a break from it. The document has stood the test of time as an expression of universal human values. The American colonists had considered themselves Englishmen, with roots in the *Magna Carta*. They trusted parliamentary government to be a brake on the power of the Crown. It took years of short-sighted policies by King George III, backed by abusive parliamentary leaders, to unite a panoply of different colonists and drive them to declare independence.

The Wise General

After the Declaration of Independence was signed, there was no question as to who would lead the fight against England. Two days before the Battle of Bunker Hill, the Continental Congress accepted the motion of John Adams that it establish its own army and that George Washington be named Commander-in-Chief. The Bostonian believed the Virginian could best unite the Colonies.

Washington had arrived at the session wearing his saber and uniform, a Brigadier General expecting to lead the Virginia militia. When Adams nominated him for overall command, he hurriedly left the room. After being told that “all Americans awaited him to take command,” Washington replied, “I, this day, declare with the utmost sincerity that I do not think myself

equal to the command I am honored with.” The once cocky young officer who had quarreled over rank, pay, and prestige now held his country’s highest rank and refused to be paid at all.²⁹

Facing overwhelming odds and knowing that a traditional strategy would be disastrous for his outnumbered, untrained, and poorly supplied force, Washington engaged in a Fabian approach. Fabius was the Roman general who employed delaying tactics and harassment to outmaneuver Hannibal and eventually exhausted the Carthaginian armies. For his part, Washington spent the first several years of the war using feint and misdirection to get the British to chase his army across the middle colonies. He avoided engaging the enemy unless conditions were opportune or the clash was absolutely necessary.

This strategy reflected the fact that Washington’s “Continental” force was not a true national army. The Continental Congress never authorized proper recruiting and failed to bind recruits to serve the whole nation or for the duration of the war. Without the ability to raise taxes, the Congress could never pay its troops reliably either. In the winter of 1777-78, the entire force at Valley Forge had less than 2,000 men ready to fight.

All of this exacted some significant cost to Washington’s carefully groomed and preciously tended reputation. Of the seven major battles he fought during that period, Washington was defeated five times. Among his fiercest critics were some of his own generals, and many in the Continental Congress were skeptical of his ability to lead the nation to victory.

Yet Washington demonstrated time and again an ability to hold his men together long enough for events to turn. With surprise and deception, he crossed the Delaware River on Christmas night, 1776, attacked the Hessian Guards at Trenton, and secured a safe withdrawal by winning the Battle of Princeton. The impact of this success on the morale of the beleaguered colonists was even more valuable as an example of what could be achieved than the military value of the victory itself. “Trenton was the first great cause for hope, a brave and truly ‘brilliant’ stroke.” It was the victory that encouraged the French to become involved in the war as America’s first critical ally. British historian Sir George Otto Trevelyan wrote of Trenton, “It may be doubted whether so small a number of men ever employed so short a space of time with greater and more lasting effects upon the history of the world.”³⁰

In 1778, Washington showed the singular power of his presence when he single-handedly stopped the retreat of his men at Monmouth Court House. The Marquis de Lafayette would proclaim, “General Washington seemed to arrest fortune with one glance...His presence stopped the retreat...I thought then as now that I had never beheld so superb a man.”³¹ By 1780, aided by the French fleet and General Nathanael Greene’s brilliance in the South, Washington was winning the war for the emerging nation.

On March 10, 1783, on the cusp of final victory, Washington’s character and leadership were tested once again. Hostilities with Britain had ended and only the signing of a peace treaty remained, but mutiny was brewing among the American forces. An anonymous letter was circulated among the officers while the Continental Army was encamped at Newburgh, New York. The troops had served for years without pay, and with a Continental Congress that still

could not raise its own revenue they had little hope of receiving their promised pensions. This was a dramatic and defining moment. Would Washington lead his troops to march on Congress and demand redress, an action that would defy civilian authority and possibly result in a military coup, or would he convince a group of men who had already sacrificed so much to wait still longer? For Washington, the answer was clear.

At a meeting of the officers a few days later, Washington made a surprise entrance, much to the consternation of officers hoping the meeting would be led by General Horatio Gates, who was squarely on their side. Washington gave an impassioned speech urging the officers to give Congress more time to act justly. But the men were unconvinced, and many frustrated faces could still be seen in the crowd. Washington was prepared to play his part in the theater of history. He pulled out a letter from a member of Congress and prepared to read it to the crowd:

The officers stirred impatiently in their seats, and then suddenly every heart missed a beat. Something was the matter with His Excellency. He seemed unable to read the paper. He paused in bewilderment. He fumbled in his waistcoat pocket. And then he pulled out something that only his intimates had seen him wear. A pair of glasses. With infinite sweetness and melancholy he explained, "Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown gray but almost blind in the service of my country." This simple statement achieved what all Washington's rhetoric and all his arguments had been unable to achieve. The officers were instantly in tears, and from behind the shining drops, their eyes looked with love at the commander who had led them all so far and long.³²

Looking into the pained faces of men who had given years of their lives to the cause of the nation, and offered the opportunity to seize more power for himself as their leader, Washington put his country ahead of his own power and the desires of his men. He urged patience and compromise when other men would have joined the chorus of angry voices and used force to achieve justice for their troops. He then laid down his saber to return to Mount Vernon Estates and his life as a planter, the Cincinnatus of his age.

Professor James Truslow Adams, renowned scholar of early American history and direct descendant of Presidents John Adams and John Quincy Adams, summed up the entire saga:

There were great patriots in America whose names are inscribed in the story of that time....But war brings out the worst as well as the best in men....It was hard to get men into the army, and to keep them there...But [Washington] always had an army...which held the flag flying in the field through love of him and confidence in the character which they sensed in his dignified presence. Without him the cause would have been irretrievably lost...When the days were blackest, men clung to his unfaltering courage as to the last firm ground in a rising flood. When, later, the forces of disunion in the new country seemed to threaten disruption, men again rallied to him as the sole bond of union. Legacy to

America from these troubled years, he is, apart from independence itself, the noblest heritage of all.³³

The Constitutional Convention

In 1786, James Madison led the Virginia Legislature to invite the thirteen ostensibly independent members of the confederated United States to Annapolis, Maryland, to discuss interstate relations. The “commissioners” at that September meeting called for a “Grand Convention” of the States for the following summer, to explore ways of improving the Articles of Confederation. After just five years in force, the Articles were proving to be a triumph of the fear of tyranny over the practical needs of a vast, new nation. They provided the national government with little central authority, no effective executive power, a dysfunctional decision-making process, and no means of resolving interstate conflict. From May 14th to September 17th, through the scorching summer of 1787, delegates from twelve of the states met in Philadelphia. The stakes were high. Madison believed the Convention would “decide forever the fate of republican government.”³⁴

George Washington, hero of the Revolution and universally esteemed, was unanimously elected as presiding officer. By accepting this role, Washington lent the Convention his personal credibility and gave it the crucial degree of legitimacy it needed in order to have a chance for success. Washington imposed an atmosphere of civility on the Convention from the very start. He had sufficient standing among his peers that he might have all but dictated the proceedings, yet he hardly spoke at all. No grand orations, just a thank you for his election, a statement on the final day, and the aura of his heroic leadership. His quiet dignity and example of self-restraint set a high standard of discipline and diligence.

In addition, Washington required a rule of absolute secrecy, taking such measures as locking the doors and closing all windows for every session to ensure complete privacy. When a delegate left confidential notes on his desk during a break, the man received Washington’s unmitigated wrath. Washington believed that secrecy was the key to the exchanges and trade-offs of compromise. Only if participants felt safe to speak their minds without fear of public retribution could they engage in the open and frank discussions through which meaningful compromise is reached. Madison commended this rule as the “necessary precaution” in view of “the material difference between the appearance of a subject in its first and undigested shape and after it shall have properly matured and arranged.”³⁵

Even with Washington’s leadership, success was far from assured. While the delegates stayed at the same inns, ate at the same restaurants and attended the same parties during the summer of 1787, their regional differences seemed to drive them further apart. “Americans in the middle and southern states had a hard time understanding how the New Englanders spoke. Dialect and cultural differences were extremely strong. Slave culture in the south was very different from the north. Economical interests were also very different.”³⁶ At times, the differences in viewpoints were so numerous and disparaging that a far-from-pious Benjamin

Franklin proposed that “Prayers imploring the assistance of heaven... be held in this Assembly every morning.”³⁷ Although it was agreed that Franklin’s unexpected proposal could expose the dissension to the outside world, his dramatic plea made the point. The delegates had to hew to Washington’s rules of civility and compromise if the Convention was to achieve the higher ground they sought.

The principle challenges for the Constitutional Convention were three-fold: the creation of a legislature, an executive office, and a judiciary. The greatest division in the Convention was between the large and small states regarding the structure of a legislature. Large states favored representation proportional to population, while smaller states opposed any measure denying them equal standing in policy-making. Dueling plans from Virginia and New Jersey produced a two-month stalemate that was only broken by adoption of “The Great Compromise.”

Constitutional authority Max Farrand wrote of the compromise, “There was no other that compared with it in importance. Its most significant features were that in the upper house each State should have an equal vote and that in the lower house representation should be apportioned on the basis of population, while direct taxation should follow the same proportion [and] the further proviso that money bills should originate in the lower house.” Farrand discounts the conventional wisdom that “an essential feature of The Great Compromise was the counting of only three-fifths of the slaves in enumerating the population,” noting that the concept was already widely accepted and supported. It originated as a feature of the Revenue Amendment of 1783 and was incorporated in both the New Jersey and Virginia plans.³⁸

Reflecting on the end result, George Washington wrote that, “It appears to me, then, little short of a miracle, that the Delegates from so many different States (which States you know are also different from each other in their manners, circumstances and prejudices [*sic*]) should unite in forming a system of national Government, so little liable to well founded objections.”³⁹ In his humility, Washington downplayed his own role in this “miracle,” but final success depended heavily on Washington’s ability to persuade his fellow delegates to soften their harsh rhetoric and come together for a compromise that would ensure the future of the young nation. The Great Compromise is indicative of the air of cooperation and civility that permeated the Convention in the name of securing America’s future. Only in such an environment could Benjamin Franklin’s famous exhortation have carried the day:

It therefore astonishes me, sir, to find this system approaching so near to perfection as it does; and I think it will astonish our enemies. . . Thus I consent, Sir, to this Constitution because I expect no better, and because I am not sure that it is not the best. The opinions I have had of its errors, I sacrifice to the public good. . . I cannot help expressing a wish that every member of the Convention who may still have objection to [the Constitution], would with me, on this occasion doubt a little of his own infallibility, and to make manifest our unanimity, put his name to this instrument.⁴⁰

Despite Washington’s imperative of civility and tendency to overlook faults in others, the Convention cost him one of his oldest and closest friends, his long-time plantation neighbor,

George Mason. Mason was a moral absolutist who rejected compromise, at least during the hearings regarding the Bill of Rights. The author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, Mason stubbornly insisted that a similar “Bill of Rights” be included as part of the Constitution. Though many delegates supported the Mason version, most were unwilling to risk the success of the Convention by insisting on it. Thus they crafted a deal by which the Bill of Rights would be considered as a slate of Amendments immediately after ratification of the Constitution itself. Only Mason and Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts refused this final compromise.

Washington was adamant that the Constitution pass for the sake of the nation. Mason was just as adamant in his opposition. He was prepared to risk the future of the country if he did not get his way. Washington could never forgive an unwillingness to compromise when he thought the Republic itself was in jeopardy.

In all our deliberations . . . we kept steadily in our view . . . the consolidation of our Union, in which is involved our prosperity, felicity, safety, perhaps our national existence. This important consideration . . . led each State in the Convention to be less rigid on points of inferior magnitude, than might have been otherwise expected; and thus the Constitution, which we now present, is the result of a spirit of amity, and of that mutual deference and concession which the peculiarity of our political situation rendered indispensable.⁴¹

The First Presidency

As the preeminent hero of the American Revolution, a successful planter and businessman, a leading Virginia gentleman, and “the indispensable man” at the Constitutional Convention, George Washington was the universal choice to lead the country in its experiment with a new form of government. Had he wanted, he probably could have been named President-for-Life, or even King of America. Instead, he chose to accept the greater challenge, inventing the role of President in a federal republic.

The scope of this challenge cannot be overstated. The Revolutionary War had been fought by colonists who saw tyranny as the inevitable result of a powerful chief executive. This is why the Articles of Confederation eschewed national executive leadership and the new Constitution appeared to subordinate the executive branch to the legislative branch. Article I declared the legislative branch to be the “first branch” of government and imbued it with an extensive and highly detailed array of responsibility and authority. Article II was much thinner gruel, appointing the President as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces and granting him limited power to make appointments (subject to approval by the Senate), but offering little else by way of guidance to those who would fill the office.

“The Founders appear to have been willing to create an independent presidency with significant powers in large part because they expected the position to be filled by George Washington.”⁴² While the delegates could not agree on how to structure the Presidency, they could agree to entrust George Washington with the power to shape the job for himself and for

those who came after him, so that the lack of specificity became the means for a vigorous Presidency. With his vision and character, Washington proved worthy of the trust. He established boundaries and distributed executive power where possible, developing an effective executive capability while avoiding excessive presidential power.

Washington also understood the need for pomp and ceremony in the first inauguration. He knew he had to allow jubilation and ceremony to establish his legitimacy as head of state in the eyes of a nation and the world. Despite misgivings, he adopted the trappings of power to convey the importance and authority of the Presidency, yet later recalled that this attention left him “agitated and embarrassed more than ever he was by the leveled cannon or pointed musket.”⁴³

One of President Washington’s first acts was to appoint a Cabinet. To borrow a phrase from Doris Kearns Goodwin’s description of Abraham Lincoln’s War Cabinet, Washington appointed a “Team of Rivals” from different factions: Alexander Hamilton as Secretary of Treasury, Henry Knox as Secretary of War, Thomas Jefferson as Secretary of State, and Edmund Randolph as Attorney General. Management of this group was another example of George Washington’s heroic leadership. He led a highly ambitious team, superior to himself in education and intellect and frequently competitive with one another. Hamilton, the nationalist, champion of commerce and fiscal responsibility, and Jefferson, the virtuous Southern agrarian, presented particular challenges. Washington was the glue that held them together, giving each his due and his own degree of authority, but reserving final decision-making for himself.

Against the backdrop of a contest over the permanent location of the new national capital, the fledgling nation faced an overwhelming debt crisis that threatened its very survival. Most states were unable to pay off the debts they had accrued during the Revolution. This hurt the national economy and made it increasingly difficult for the federal government to obtain the credit it needed to function effectively. At the direction of Congress, Secretary Hamilton prepared a “masterly report, which is justly regarded as the corner-stone of American public credit.... The principles of action that it embodied...were few and simple, chief among them being exact and punctual fulfillment of contract. ‘States, like individuals, who observe their engagements, are respected and trusted; while the reverse is the fate of those who pursue an opposite conduct.’”⁴⁴

Virginia Congressman James Madison opposed Hamilton’s proposal that the Federal government assume state debts. Virginia, Maryland, and Georgia had already met their obligations and objected to bailing out their less responsible compatriots. Allied with Madison, Jefferson complained that the debt assumption was reminiscent of the British Empire. President Washington made the difficult decision to break from his Virginia roots and back Hamilton’s national plan, but he could not resolve the fight within Congress. “[In 1790,] the quarrels over assumption and the national capital grew so vitriolic that it didn’t seem farfetched that the Union might break up over the issues.”⁴⁵

Encountering Hamilton one evening, not far from Washington's residence in New York City, Jefferson registered how haggard and dejected the usually dapper figure looked. Knowing Hamilton loved good cuisine, he invited Hamilton to what was to be one of the most fruitful dinner parties in our nation's history. Through this gesture of civility, over Jefferson's best food and wine, the two men reached a compromise to save the Republic. Jefferson agreed that the federal government would assume state war debts and Hamilton agreed in return to support moving the capital from New York to what is now the District of Columbia, just up the Potomac River from Washington's home at Mount Vernon, Virginia.

In the face of standoff, Washington's values of shrewd civility and carefully calculated compromise prevailed. Within a few years, the economy was booming, aided by European capital, Hamilton's financial genius, and Jefferson's "grand bargain." Further, in his decisive choice to support Hamilton's federal approach over Jefferson's and Madison's state-centered policies, Washington set a course of dispute resolution that continues to endure.

Civility as a National Value

Washington established the model for dealing with one of the most sensitive subjects in American politics: the place of religion in public life. In his farewell address, he offered his view that, "religion and morality are indispensable supports" of political prosperity.⁴⁶ He was a communicant and vestryman of the Episcopal Church, but he welcomed Muslims as employees at Mount Vernon and improved and expanded the mosque there to accommodate them. As President, he set an example of tolerance and understanding by attending services with Catholics and Baptists, communicating with Quakers, and visiting the historic Touro synagogue of Newport, Rhode Island. In a time when religion often defined communities and society, that public demonstration of civility and fraternity was a striking example of his inclusive leadership. Following that important meeting, Washington wrote the congregation, promising that:

All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For happy the government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens... May the children of the stock of Abraham, who dwell in this land, continue to merit and enjoy the goodwill of the other inhabitants.⁴⁷

Political factionalism was another sensitive issue in early American politics, and a concern Washington shared with many of the Founders. In *Federalist No. 10*, James Madison explained the Founders' objections to regional and political factionalism and made the case against political parties. Washington reflected these ideas in his first Administration, offering political appointments to people from all regions of the country and across the political spectrum, and encouraging an atmosphere of civil discussion and political compromise to secure and retain

higher political ground. He took a still stronger stand against parties and factionalism in his Farewell Address – offering a warning the nation did not heed:

There is an opinion, that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the Administration of the Government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of Liberty – This within certain limits is probably true – But in [Governments] of the popular character, in Governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged – there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be, by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it.⁴⁸

Throughout his presidency, George Washington showed a conscious awareness of his responsibility to set precedents and model policies for those who would succeed him. He imbued the role of President with his personal commitment to civility and compromise, but set the standard that the nation must always come first, ahead of personal interests and relationships. Deeply concerned about the blindness power can create in leaders, and wary of the threat of demagoguery and dictatorship in America, he voluntarily relinquished power after two terms. This ensured a peaceful, orderly transfer of power under the Constitution – a great symbolic achievement in a world dominated by hereditary tyrants. In all of this, George Washington embodied the emergent brand of Americanism, using his personal character to define not just the Presidency, but the very notion of a united, federal republic. As James Truslow Adams wrote:

In the travail of war and revolution, America had brought forth a man to be ranked with the greatest and noblest of any age in all the world... When we think of Washington... we think of the man who by sheer force of character held a divided and disorganized country together until victory was achieved, and who, after peace was won, still held his disunited countrymen by their love and respect and admiration for himself until a nation was welded into enduring strength and unity.⁴⁹

²⁸Thomas Jefferson, "Thomas Jefferson to Walter Jones, January 2, 1814" in *The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes*, Federal Edition, ed. Paul Leicester Ford. *The Thomas Jefferson Papers*. The Library of Congress American Memory. Accessed June 12, 2011, <http://memory.loc.gov/master/mss/mtj/mtj1/047/0100/0167.jpg>.

²⁹ Willard Sterne Randall, *George Washington: A Life* (New York: Henry Holt and Company), 284.

³⁰David McCullough, *1776* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005), 291.

³¹Quoted in James Thomas Flexner, *George Washington in the American Revolution (1775-1783)* (Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1967), 306.

³²Flexner, 507.

³³James Truslow Adams, *The Epic of America* (New York: Triangle Books, 1941), 95.

³⁴Max Farrand, *The Fathers of the Constitution: A Chronicle of the Establishment of the Union* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), 108.

³⁵David O. Stewart, *The Summer of 1787: The Men Who Invented the Constitution* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2007), 52.

³⁶David O. Stewart, "The Constitutional Convention," *Civility and the American Experience*, National Endowment for the Humanities Roundtable, 2011, Electronic video.

³⁷Quoted in Farrand, 120

³⁸Farrand, 121

³⁹George Washington to Lafayette, February 7, 1788, *The Papers*, Confederation Series, <http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/constitution/1788/index.html>.

⁴⁰Benjamin Franklin, "Madison Debates September 17" *Avalon Project at the Yale Law School Lillian Goldman Law Library*, 2008, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/debates_917.asp#1.

⁴¹George Washington, "Letter to the President of the Continental Congress, September 17, 1787" in *Rediscovering George Washington*, PBS.org http://www.pbs.org/georgewashington/collection/other_1787sep17.html.

⁴²Fred I. Greenstein, "Presidential Difference in the Early Republic: The Highly Disparate Leadership Styles of Washington, Adams, and Jefferson," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (August 24, 2006): 373-90.

⁴³Louise Durbin, "George Washington," in *Inaugural Cavalcade* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1971), 1-10.

⁴⁴Henry Jones Ford, *Washington and His Colleagues* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920), 56.

⁴⁵Ron Chernow, *Alexander Hamilton* (New York: Penguin Press, 2004), 326.

⁴⁶U.S. Congress. Senate. *Washington's Farewell Address to the People of the United States*. 106th Cong., 2nd sess., 2000. S.Doc. 106-21.

⁴⁷George Washington, "Letter to the Hebrew Congregation at Newport," *PBS, The Claremont Institute, Rediscovering George Washington*, 2002. http://www.pbs.org/georgewashington/milestones/hebrew_congregation_about.html.

⁴⁸U.S. Congress, Senate, *Washington's Farewell Address to the People of the United States*, 106th Cong., 2nd sess., 2000, Senate document, 106-21.

⁴⁹Adams, 95.

HENRY CLAY: THE GREAT COMPROMISER

Let us look to our country and our cause, elevate ourselves to the dignity of pure and disinterested patriots, and save our country from all impending dangers. What if, in the march of this nation to greatness and power, we should be buried beneath the wheels that propel it onward! What are we – what is any man – worth who is not ready and willing to sacrifice himself for the benefit of his country when it is necessary?

– Henry Clay, 1850⁵⁰

The young Henry Clay, like all schoolboys of his age, grew up revering George Washington, the heroic Father of the Country. What Clay would not have known, because it was already overlooked, even then, was how Washington struggled as a young man to overcome his flaws – his temper, his ego, his impatience and his defeat at Great Meadows. Clay himself would face similar dramatic challenges, but not until well into his career as a national leader.

Clay came to the U.S. House of Representatives at the age of 34, already a veteran of two short stints in the U.S. Senate. He is the only person ever elected Speaker of the House on his first day in office and is also the youngest Speaker ever to serve. Along with John C. Calhoun, he was a member of a group described by one Federalist as “young politicians, half hatched, the shell still in their heads, and their pen feathers not yet shed.”⁵¹ These fire-breathers, known as War Hawks, were incensed that Great Britain was insulting American honor through interference on the high seas. They were also looking for a pretext to acquire land in Canada and Western Florida, so their aim was to push President James Madison into what would prove an ill-advised war with Great Britain.

Like many great leaders, Henry Clay knew when to pivot. The War of 1812 barely amounted to a draw. The military expedition into Canada failed, and the White House was burned in the counterattack. The only American successes were won by the Navy and by General Andrew Jackson in the Battle of New Orleans, fought weeks after the war had officially ended. Recognizing his own complicity in the errors that led to the war, he resigned his seat in Congress to become a member of the peace mission negotiating the Treaty of Ghent. Re-elected to the House upon his return, he reclaimed his Speakership in 1815, no longer just a warrior, but a national leader focused on the preservation of the Republic. He became the pre-eminent voice of unity and compromise in the troubled decades that preceded the Civil War.

“Clay was that national ambiguity defined. He was a westerner from the South. Yet he was not southern, because he deplored slavery. His owning slaves, however, meant that he was not northern.”⁵² He was described as a man of ferocious intelligence and “commanding grace, which compensated for the fact that he was a singularly unattractive young man.”⁵³ When he spoke, he could electrify a crowd. A student of both George Washington’s career and the classics in which Washington himself was educated, Clay understood the principles of heroic

political leadership: a shrewd civility, unstinting public service, and a constructive approach to compromise. He ran for President five times, always losing. Arguably though, he contributed more to the nation as a Congressional leader and the Great Compromiser than he could have as President. Indeed, he once said, “I had rather be right than be President.”⁵⁴

Clay was the indispensable man in the Missouri Compromise of 1820, the Compromise Tariff of 1833, and the Compromise of 1850. In each of these crises, Clay demonstrated the hallmarks of civility as a martial art – listening, building trust, encouraging understanding, and fostering flexibility – all with the skill and patience to await circumstances that would allow him to “[c]raft conciliation and resolve contentious questions with mutual concession. Time was always his greatest ally. Given enough time, anything was achievable, the fiercest tempers would cool, the most rigid positions would bend.”⁵⁵

Would slavery be allowed to exist in the new territories as they sought to become states? Congress was divided. Personal and political animosity ran deep. There was little common ground to be found. From the time the English established it on these shores, slavery had been a point of contention in America, always threatening to rip apart whatever unity the disparate regions could find. The Founders believed slavery would die a natural death for reasons of economic efficiency. That is why there was little protest over the Constitutional provision banning the importation of slaves after 1808. Eli Whitney’s invention of the cotton gin in 1793 changed this, making slave labor economically attractive again. During Clay’s years in Congress, the institution of slavery remained inextricably linked both to the economics of the South and the politics of westward expansion.

The Missouri Compromise

As Missouri sought statehood in 1819, debates over slavery intensified again. New York Representative James Tallmadge believed that if it was to be permitted in Missouri, it should be extinguished within one generation:

And provided, that the further introduction of slavery or involuntary servitude be prohibited, except for the punishment of crimes, whereof the party shall have been fully convicted; and that all children born within the said State, after the admission thereof into the Union, shall be free at the age of twenty-five years.⁵⁶

Southerners vehemently opposed this plan and Tallmadge’s amendment to the statehood resolution was rejected by the Senate, where Southern states exercised more power. Senator Thomas Cobb of Georgia went so far as to accuse Tallmadge of having “kindled a fire that all the waters of the ocean cannot put out, which seas of blood can only extinguish.” Unfazed, Tallmadge responded that if civil war were inevitable, “Let it come!” A compromise seemed impossible.⁵⁷

This was the environment in which Henry Clay sought legislative alternatives that could prevent civil war. For Clay personally, slavery was a morally ambiguous issue. He owned

slaves himself and used them at Ashland, his Kentucky plantation, but he advocated abolition and periodically freed some of his own slaves. Over the course of his career, he initiated several calls for a variety of approaches to emancipation in Kentucky and throughout the union. These contradictions, along with his prodigious legislative and leadership skills, made him well-suited to be a compromiser between both sides and to craft a resolution to the crisis.

In addition to being well-positioned to lead compromise, Clay believed in the morality of compromise. He understood the critical need for the preservation of a union Lincoln was to call “the last, best hope” for all mankind. Clay did not see himself as compromising on the issue of slavery itself because he recognized that slavery would continue to exist in the Americas whether a compromise was reached or not. As an abolitionist, albeit a conflicted one, Clay believed abolition and emancipation would be more likely achieved within the construct of a united nation than in whatever remnants might remain after a civil war. Saving the Union was the imperative, both for free Americans and for slaves as well. That required compromise.

Clay found an opening for compromise in Maine’s 1820 application for statehood. Illinois Senator Jesse Thomas tied Maine and Missouri together to keep the balance of power between slave and non-slave states in the Senate. This gave Clay the ability to push a bill through the House that the Senate would also accept: Maine would be added as a free state, Missouri would be added as a slave state, and a line of demarcation for slavery in future state admissions would be drawn at the 36° 30’ parallel. After Missouri, no new states admitted from territories above the boundary would be allowed to permit slavery. The restriction was not seen as a major concession by the South because the climate in northern areas was not conducive to the slave-based agriculture of the South.

Still, the most ardent partisans on both sides of the slavery debate saw compromise as a euphemism for the betrayal of morality. Extremists found a powerful voice in Virginia’s John Randolph, a strong advocate for states’ rights and critic of federal legislative authority over slavery. Clay respected the power of Randolph’s rhetoric and the deep emotional pull it would have on both the groups opposing compromise, but as a strong, skilled Speaker, Clay was master of his House. Each time Randolph attempted to speak, Clay ruled him out of order. When this tactic was exhausted, and Randolph took to the floor of the House to rally the absolutists of both sides, Clay used an obscure parliamentary procedure to split the bill in two, ending debate and silencing Randolph again. Under Clay’s leadership, the two bills each captured the support of moderates as well as one set of hard-liners. Compromise was achieved through two narrow victories.⁵⁸

Four years later, things were different for Clay. The disputed Presidential election of 1824 is often called the most controversial in early American history. It was not a partisan contest, but a sectional one, with four distinct candidates representing different areas and constituencies of the diverse Republic.

When the votes were counted, Jackson had 99 and Adams 84, whereas Crawford, who suffered a paralytic stroke, had 41, and Clay only 37. No one having been elected, the choice was thrown into the House of Representatives, Clay having

there the power to elect either of his opponents. His choice fell on Adams as the abler man and the one whose policies were nearer his own.”⁵⁹

When Adams nominated Clay to be his Secretary of State, Clay was accused of unethical dealings and crafting a supposedly “corrupt bargain.” Clay served as Secretary of State for the next four years, but the shameful charge of “corrupt bargain” would continue to haunt him during his future attempts at the presidency. Bargains entail moral hazard, as Clay knew better than most.

A Second Compromise

In 1831, with the nation in the midst of the Nullification Crisis, Clay returned to Congress as one of Kentucky’s Senators. The Tariff of 1828, designed to protect fledgling American industry from more efficient foreign imports, was dubbed the “Tariff of Abominations” because its high rates hurt the Southern agricultural economy. Vice President John C. Calhoun of South Carolina began to build support against the tariff. In his “Exposition and Protest,” he argued that South Carolina would be justified in nullifying the law within its own borders. The Tariff of 1832 removed some of the most objectionable provisions, but tensions were not defused.

A few months later the South Carolina legislature passed a law declaring the tariffs null and void and threatening secession from the Union if the federal government attempted to intervene. President Jackson began to prepare troops for a confrontation and sought authority from Congress to engage in military action to prevent secession. Clay had long been a strong advocate of tariffs as a part of the “American System” of economic development that he and Calhoun had launched with the Tariff of 1816. Fifteen years later though, Clay’s primary goal was preservation of the Union. Clay crafted an ingenious compromise which kept tariff rates high for seven years, but ended all economic protectionism in 1840. The late House Historian Robert Remini observed that “...Clay was never rigid in his ideological thinking. He understood that politics is not about ideological purity or moral self-righteousness. It is about governing.”⁶⁰

Clay’s Final Compromise

Clay’s Compromise of 1833 once again temporarily eased tensions between the North and South, but it was only a matter of time before things would deteriorate. In 1845, the government found itself in a bitter debate over the annexation of Texas. Texas sought to enter the Union as a slave state, which would tilt the balance of power in the U.S. Senate to the pro-slavery caucus. The stakes became higher the following year when it became apparent the Mexican-American War could add vast additional territories the southwestern United States. Pennsylvania Congressman David Wilmot introduced the Wilmot Proviso to ban slavery in any territory acquired from Mexico, effectively blocking Texas statehood.

Southern states threatened secession in the event that slavery was restricted in new territories south of the 36°30' parallel, and sought to extend the line to the Pacific Ocean. At the same time, California and New Mexico, which both included territory below the 36°30' line, were applying to enter the Union as free states. Further complicating matters, abolitionists were trying to end slavery in the District of Columbia, while Southerners were seeking a more aggressive fugitive slave law. So was established another period of high drama in Congress.

Many looked to Henry Clay to step forward and resolve the crisis. Clay had left the Senate in 1842 and had no desire to return after unsuccessful presidential bids in both 1844 and 1848. Nonetheless, like Washington before him, Clay again answered the call to the nation's service. In 1849, he accepted the Kentucky legislature's re-appointment to the U.S. Senate. That same year, Clay openly endorsed the gradual emancipation of slaves in Kentucky, and urged the legislature to pass a law that would lead to this, even though he himself remained a slave owner.⁶¹

Any optimism Clay had about brokering another compromise quickly dimmed when he arrived for the new session of Congress in March, 1849. Tension and dissension were the order of the day. For the only time in history, the House of Representatives failed to elect a Speaker, and so could not conduct the nation's business. It took sixty-three ballots, and an unprecedented agreement to allow victory by plurality rather than majority, to break the impasse.⁶² The threat to the institution of slavery and to the balance of power in Congress led some Southern leaders, including John C. Calhoun, to call for a convention to discuss how to address "Northern aggression." With this was planned for June, 1850, in Nashville. Clay had to act quickly to keep the Union together.

The master strategist worked feverishly through the month of January, 1850, crafting a "grand bargain" to address all the major issues at the same time. He shared his plan with only a select few members of Congress before presenting it on the Senate floor at the end of January. The proposal included provisions that allowed California and New Mexico to enter the Union as free states, set a Texas boundary exclusive of New Mexico in exchange for the U.S. assumption of Texas's debts, banned the slave trade in the District of Columbia (but not slavery itself), strengthened the fugitive slave law, and forbade Congress from interfering in the interstate slave trade.

Clay's marathon presentation of over four hours on the Senate floor received praise from many around the country. Within Congress, however, there were complaints from both Southerners and Northerners that the bill favored one side more than the other. Clay's commitment to the Founders' philosophy of civility and compromise seemed almost quixotic in an atmosphere so contentious that Mississippi Senator Henry Foote threatened Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri with a loaded pistol while on the Senate floor. As Clay's proposal and others were referred to a Senate Select Committee of Thirteen to prepare a final bill, President Zachary Taylor complicated things further, expressing his opposition to the plan by insisting that nothing be done until California had officially applied for statehood, and then that the application be voted on as a separate issue.

While debates raged on in the Senate and House, angry delegates from nine states assembled at the convention in Nashville with the intention of allying Southern states. Although the convention stopped short of recommending disunion, it decided to reconvene after Congress had made its decision on the compromise bill. But with that crisis temporarily averted, another flared up when New Mexico sought President Taylor's support for their statehood under a free-state constitution. Texas strongly opposed the boundaries being claimed by New Mexico and even threatened to send troops to Santa Fe.

Clay began to despair that a compromise could ever be reached with the Taylor administration working against him, but in another dramatic turn of events, Taylor contracted cholera and died a painful death within a matter of days. Clay's close friend, Vice President Millard Fillmore, became President. Thus the odds for compromise improved. In the weeks that followed, Clay was even able to see the passage of an amendment that would allow the territories to ban slavery, an addition the South had vehemently opposed.

On July 22, 1850, in an effort to push the grand bargain over the finish line, Clay gave one of the longest, most passionate speeches of his career. Newspaper editor Frances Blair said he had never heard him more eloquent or exhibiting "greater resources of mind."⁶³ In several heartfelt outbursts, Clay appealed to the patriotism, nationalist fervor, and moral foundations of his audience. He won their cheer, laughter, and applause. Clay cried out, "From the bottom of my soul," that the omnibus bill would be "the reunion of the Union. I believe it is the dove of peace . . . taking its aerial flight from the dome of the Capitol." Exhausted, and dying a slow death from tuberculosis, Clay echoed Benjamin Franklin's plea for the adoption of the Constitution. Before collapsing into his seat, he begged the Senate to put aside petty jealousies and individual desires, and "Think alone of our God, our country, our consciences, and our generous Union."⁶⁴

Compromise appeared to be on the horizon when suddenly, on July 31, Maryland Senator James Pearce moved to strike a portion of the section dealing with the Texas border because he believed it was too controversial. The motion passed. There followed a cascade of votes striking various portions of the compromise until it had been totally dismantled. Crushed, the frail Clay quickly left the Senate chamber. Returning the next day, he made one last fervent statement of support for passage of the individual bills of his compromise. He then left Congress to convalesce as the tuberculosis continued to rob him of his strength.

In Clay's absence, Senator Stephen Douglas, the "Little Giant" of Illinois, stepped forward to lead the effort for passage of the individual elements of the compromise. In a matter of weeks he won approval of all the major elements of the omnibus bill as separate measures. The omnibus bill had united Senators who opposed the entire compromise because of one or two provisions. With great skill, Douglas was able to build different winning coalitions for each individual bill. It is a measure of this accomplishment that only four Senators ended up supporting all of the bills.

With Douglas's help, Clay was able to see a civil war averted once again, but the victory was dimmed both by his failure to orchestrate the compromise himself and by his failing health.

Clay died in 1852, his beloved Union still intact. Many years later, Senator Foote would say, “Had there been one such man in the Congress of the United States as Henry Clay in 1860-61, there would, I feel sure, have been no civil war.”⁶⁵ Nor, perhaps, might slavery have been abolished as early as it was. As Remini observed,

The compromise [of 1850] did two things that made the difference. First, it gave the North ten years to further its industrialization, by which it strengthened its ability to survive a protracted military conflict... Second, the compromise gave the North ten years to find Abraham Lincoln.⁶⁶

Like Washington, Jefferson, and other Founders, Clay had ambivalent feelings about slavery, but not about the importance of a strong, united country. As the Founders built a nation around ideals that would eventually force abolition, Clay preserved the Union long enough to place it in the hands of the Great Emancipator. Clay’s victories were models of the power of civility and compromise in Congressional leadership. Devoted like Washington to the search for higher ground over smaller minds and sectional interests, the old “War Hawk” kept the peace and preserved the Union for more than forty years. In the end, that is what it took to be able to fight and win the eventual, inevitable civil war and bring freedom to all Americans.

⁵⁰Henry Clay, “On the Compromise of 1850,” in *The World’s Great Speeches: 292 Speeches from Pericles to Nelson Mandela*, Fourth Enlarged Edition, Edited by Lewis Copeland, Lawrence W. Lamm, and Stephen J. McKenna (New York: Dover Publications, 1999), 289.

⁵¹David S. Heidler and Jeanne T. Heidler, *Henry Clay: The Essential American* (New York: Random House, 2011), 85.

⁵²Heidler, xii.

⁵³Robert Remini, *At the Edge of the Precipice: Henry Clay and the Compromise that Saved the Union* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), (4).

⁵⁴Dr. Michael Lorenzen, “I Had Rather Be Right Than President,” *American Presidents Blog*, February 5, 2008, <http://www.american-presidents.org/2008/02/i-had-rather-be-right-than-president.html>.

⁵⁵Heidler, 127.

⁵⁶“History of Congress: Admission of Missouri” (Annals of Congress, House of Representatives, 15th Congress, 2nd Session, 1819), 1169-1170, <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llac&fileName=033/llac033.db&recNum=582>.

⁵⁷Remini, 3.

⁵⁸Heidler, 148.

⁵⁹Adams, 170.

⁶⁰Remini, 21.

⁶¹Remini, 37-42.

⁶²Remini, 52-54.

⁶³Remini, 135.

⁶⁴Remini, 137.

⁶⁵Senator Foote, quoted in Remini, 155.

⁶⁶Remini, 158.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: HEALING A HOUSE DIVIDED

“I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was... [the] promise that in due time the weights would be lifted from the shoulders of all men and that all should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved on that basis? ...In my view of the present aspect of affairs, there is no need of bloodshed and war. There is no necessity for it. I am not in favor of such a course; and I may say in advance that there will be no bloodshed unless it is forced upon the government.”

– Abraham Lincoln’s Impromptu Speech at Independence Hall, February 22, 1861⁶⁷

Abraham Lincoln is a figure of such magnitude now that it is easy to forget how poor the general view of him was when he arrived in Washington as President. The British Ambassador, Lord Lyons, described him as “a rough farmer – who began life as a farm labourer – and got on by a talent for stump speaking.”⁶⁸ The Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Charles Sumner, called on the President-elect at the Willard Hotel and was very put off when the President proposed that they stand back to back to see who was tallest. Sumner later referred to Lincoln as “this seemingly untutored child of nature.”⁶⁹

He had served one term in the House of Representatives as the most strident opponent of the Mexican-American War in Congress. He was infamous for his Spot Resolutions speech in which he all but accused President James K. Polk of lying to justify the war, asking him to show the exact spot where American blood was spilled, and to prove that it was on American territory. Now the Republic was on the cusp of civil war and the future of the Union was hanging in the balance. Would Lincoln be like the outgoing James Buchanan, a President reputed to be in absolute panic, “pale with fear?” Buchanan came to office as one of the most qualified men ever elected President, but by the end of his term, he was said to divide his time between praying and crying, firmly denying the Constitutional right to secession, then just as firmly denying the Constitutional right of the President to do anything to oppose it.⁷⁰

Lincoln was a green, untested President-elect, with almost none of Buchanan’s experience or qualifications. But by contrast, never in Lincoln’s career had he a problem with indecision. When he accepted the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate in Springfield, Illinois in 1858, he forewarned of the way ahead, “A house divided against itself cannot stand.”⁷¹ This line resonated with a highly religious American public in the wake of The Second Great Awakening. Lincoln argued that the government could not permanently endure half-slave and half-free. He did not expect the Union to dissolve, but for the nation to resolve the issue of slavery, once and for all, and then to reconcile. America would either become all of one thing or all of the other.⁷²

Civility, compromise, and the search for higher ground are dynamic, interactive processes. There can, however, be a point where further compromise destroys fundamental principles, and so it was with a crumbling Union. Colonial leaders Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and George Washington wanted to be, and to have the rights of, Englishmen. They sought compromise with the Crown, but only to the point they felt their basic freedom and rights were being destroyed, and then came the Declaration of Independence. Through decades of artful compromise to save the Union, Henry Clay never abandoned his support for eventual abolition and emancipation. So it was for Lincoln as he assumed the presidency. He was a man of great civility, but just as he respected the power of compromise, he also knew its limits.

It is on this question, the ability to manage and balance contradictory qualities and capabilities, that Lincoln's narrative parallels those of George Washington and Henry Clay. Washington the man of war, was also a man of civility. Clay the War Hawk became Clay the Great Compromiser. Lincoln, the one-time peace activist, unsheathed the sword as Commander-in-Chief. The hand of friendship that he had extended to the South was not reciprocated, so it was used to wield the sword with great strategic skill. But what made men as diverse as Ulysses S. Grant, Walt Whitman, and Leo Tolstoy, later call Lincoln one of the greatest men in history, was his ability, as the Civil War was ending, to pivot again and become Lincoln the Great Peacemaker.⁷³

One might have expected a note of triumphalism from such man. Shockingly, his immortal Second Inaugural offered a sermon not of the mighty sword but of a conciliatory peace...

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations

– Abraham Lincoln⁷⁴

Our Greatest Commander-in-Chief

Lincoln had an eye for talent and a natural bent for strategy. At the beginning of the war, he offered a major Union command to the most promising young officer in the U.S. Army, Robert E. Lee. A true military genius, Lee considered himself a Virginian before an American and stayed loyal to his state as it seceded. When Union generals were hesitant to fight Lee, because they knew he was smarter than they were, Lincoln repaired to the Library of Congress and himself studied the works of Carl von Clausewitz and Antoine-Henri Jomini's accounts of Napoleon's campaigns. He made himself Commander-in-Chief in reality as well as in responsibility, and his effort served him well. In 1862, he refused to follow the advice of his

cabinet and go to war against Great Britain for interference on the high seas. “One war at a time” was his strategic principle.

Following his election as President, Lincoln refused to accept the Crittenden Compromise, which would have enshrined the Missouri Compromise as a constitutional amendment. Lincoln made it clear, however, that as President, he would not move against slavery where it existed. Once his hand was forced, he explicitly stated that his war aim was the preservation of the Union, not the issue of slavery. For this he was pilloried in the pulpits of the North and by the leaders of the anti-slavery movement. But it showed his command of the art of civility; his willingness to compromise to achieve higher ground, but not at the cost of his moral principles.

If Lincoln had made his initial war aim the abolition of slavery *anywhere*, he would have divided his Northern coalition and lost the war to preserve the Union. Later, with his partial victory at Antietam in 1862, he had the leverage for a “strategic reversal.” He felt he then that he had the ability to hold his Northern coalition of Democrats and Republicans and announced his intention to issue an Emancipation Proclamation in early 1863. Even here, he showed a combination of political and strategic craft. Emancipation would extend only to those states that had claimed to secede and would not apply to slaves held in the crucial border states that had remained loyal to the Union.

What this strategic pivot did is put pressure on the South’s allies in Europe. It forced key European countries to abandon their commercial support of King Cotton. The British Parliament had passed the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833, and the importation of cheap slave goods to manufacture textiles in Europe was largely morally *verboten*, but as long as the American civil war was just an internecine conflict, the question of slavery could be finessed. With the Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln made the conflict into a holy war against slavery in European eyes.

In her book *Team of Rivals*, Doris Kearns Goodwin explored Lincoln’s often contentious Cabinet, which he designed as a way to hold together a politically divided North. As Goodwin described, “Lincoln’s political genius, revealed through his extraordinary array of personal qualities . . . enabled him to form friendships with men who [had] previously opposed him; to repair injured feelings that, left unmentioned, might have escalated into permanent hostility; to assume responsibility for failure of subordinates; to share credit with ease; and to learn from mistakes.”⁷⁵ But Lincoln was always the master of this group, smarter and more strategic than anyone on his team.

As a warrior, he could often be tougher and more aggressive as well. As Commander-in-Chief, he assumed extensive war powers while Congress was out of session. He expanded the regular army (a Congressional prerogative) and suspended *habeas corpus*. He would later take over telegraph and railroad lines and deliver the Emancipation Proclamation. These were all unprecedented exercises of presidential prerogative. In Lincoln’s defense, he did this when the nation was at war and its very life was in question. Lincoln believed “the Constitution invests its Commander-in-Chief with the laws of war in time of war.”⁷⁶

Re-election: Near defeat

We read history backwards, knowing the outcomes, but it is lived forward. In the late summer of 1864, Lincoln concluded that he would lose reelection to General George B. McClellan. McClellan had become the Democratic presidential nomination running on a “Peace Platform;” one that condemned the Lincoln administration for arbitrary military arrests, suppression of speech and suppression of the “rights of states unimpaired,” meaning the rights of states to permit slavery. After a series of failures during a four-year war, victory seemed as far off as ever and there was a strong political support for immediate efforts to secure peace. As historian James McPherson wrote:

The Northern people and their President had endured other times of despondency during the war: the early winter of 1861-62, the summer of 1862, and the winter and spring of 1862-63. But at no time did their morale sink lower than the summer of 1864. By the Fourth of July the two main Union Armies seemed to be bogged down in front of Richmond/Petersburg and Atlanta after suffering a combined total of ninety-five thousand casualties in the worst carnage of the war. In the Army of the Potomac, the number of battle casualties for the two months from May 5 to July 4 was nearly two-thirds of the total in the previous three years. Some people in the North – including Mary Lincoln – began calling Grant a “butcher.”⁷⁷

Lee, known as a maneuver-minded commander, was proving to be a master of defensive warfare as well, “out-foxing” Grant with a network of defensive breastworks and trenches accompanied by the firepower of new, rapid-fire weapons. In June, at Cold Harbor, General Grant had lost 10,000 men in a matter of minutes. The “Cold Harbor syndrome” devastated morale throughout the North and Lincoln had to weigh enormous pressures to return to his original aim of merely preserving the Union, reversing the abolition of slavery. Only with the fall of Atlanta, on September 3, did the prospects, both military and political, start to improve.

The Second Inaugural Address

In the Western canon of oratory, the benchmark may be Pericles’ Funeral Oration on behalf of the fallen at the end of the first Peloponnesian War. Pericles engaged his crowd by extolling the greatness of Athens and the men who had died in order to preserve its greatness. He said, “I doubt if the world can produce a man who, where he has only himself to depend upon, is equal to so many emergencies, and graced by so happy a versatility, as the Athenian.”⁷⁸ In his best known speech, the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln paralleled Pericles, paying respect to those who gave their lives for their country and praising the country they had died for.

These great orations hold a special place in history for their powerful unifying messages, but careful consideration of Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address suggests it may be the greatest of them all. It is an extraordinary example of civility, humility, and conciliation from a time when such ideas were foreign to the minds of most Americans but were essential to the

preservation of a fragile Union in which the fires of the war were still smoldering. In moving from war to reconciliation, Lincoln offered heroic leadership for the road ahead. He pointed to the future, while echoing Washington's quest for a nation on higher ground and Clay's lifelong pursuit of civility and compromise in keeping the Union whole.

The complex drama leading up to Lincoln's Second Inaugural was one Shakespeare would have been hard-pressed to match. Throughout the Civil War, Lincoln was an ardent supporter and spokesman for the Republican agenda. As Commander-in-Chief, he prosecuted a bloody war aggressively and mercilessly, his initial objective being only the preservation of the Union by force of arms. By the autumn of 1864, things were not going well. The war raged on, Union forces were struggling, and public support for the war and Lincoln was slipping. Lincoln speculated that the next inaugural address might be given by his opponent, General George B. McClellan. Only General Sherman's victory and the fall of Atlanta changed the tides of the war – and therefore the election – in Lincoln's favor.

After his reelection, Lincoln spoke with great humility to a group of supporters from Pennsylvania. He said, "My gratitude is free from any taint of personal triumph."⁷⁹ To another group he posed the question, "Now that the election is over, may not all, having a common interest, re-unite in a common effort, to save our common country?"⁸⁰ Concerns for the future unity of the country weighed heavily on Lincoln's mind as he struggled to determine how and on what terms the Confederate states should be permitted to rejoin the Union. With Lincoln focused on the many difficulties that lay ahead for the nation, Americans expected an Inaugural Address that would parallel Lincoln's first, outlining the full scope of the challenge and detailing plans for moving forward.

March 4, 1865, began as a rainy day and spectators at the Capitol were as muddy as the streets. The inauguration drew a diverse crowd of Union soldiers, Confederate deserters, and free blacks.⁸¹ Even John Wilkes Booth and others who were to conspire on Lincoln's assassination were present. As Lincoln rose to speak, the sun suddenly broke through the clouds. Many later claimed it was a celestial phenomenon. He spoke not of celebration or triumph. He addressed the throngs of people in the somber tone of a nation that had lost 623,000 men in a gruesome war. He echoed Henry Clay's tireless pleas for the future of the country. He spoke to civility, humility, compromise, and conciliation. The message to Southerners was that Reconstruction would be about building for the future, not retribution for the past. He stood his ground against the institution of slavery, but avoided condemning those who had fought for it. He couched things in terms that would allow a diverse and divided nation to rebuild with optimism and civility.

Unusually, Lincoln opened his speech with a list of things he would not address. It was a quiet and emotionless introduction, which stood in stark contrast to the cheers emanating from the crowd before him. He made clear that his second inaugural address would be wholly different from the first in both tone and length, and would not outline a game-plan for the next four years, nor discuss the progress of Union forces. Notably, in light of the fact that so many troops were present, he exercised great restraint in not flaunting the impending victory of the North. In his invaluable book, *Lincoln's Greatest Speech: The Second Inaugural Address*,

Ronald C. White approached Lincoln's speech line by line, reflecting on the power of its progression and the nature of its motifs. He noted that, "There seems to be nothing in Lincoln's beginning paragraph that would arouse the passions of the audience."⁸² Instead, with this "anti-introduction," Lincoln quieted and intrigued his audience.

A lover of the theatre, Lincoln framed himself as an actor on the stage, not the writer or director driving the narrative of history. In his letter of April 4, 1864 to Albert Hodges, Lincoln noted, "I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me."⁸³ In the speech itself, Lincoln carried this theme by subordinating himself and the nation to the unknowable Will of God.

As peacemaker, Lincoln was reflective about the war. "All dreaded it – all sought to avert it." By stressing this, Lincoln emphasized the shared civility that united North and South. He foreshadowed the spirit of compromise and reconciliation that would be needed in the coming years. The idea that the South had not wanted to engage in war at the beginning would encourage Northerners to accept former Confederates more easily, with a sense of common ground rather than a hunger for punitive justice. Lincoln did, however, make clear the motivations of both sides, saying "Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came."⁸⁴

Of God and Country

There is continuing debate about the role of religion in this speech and in Lincoln's life generally. As White writes, "From the moment Lincoln invoked the presence of God, questions abound. How could a person who had never joined a church use such language about God? Why did this language about God appear in the Second Inaugural when it was not present in the first inaugural? What was the purpose?"⁸⁵ White finds answers in "Meditation on the Divine Will," a revealing document discovered by John Hay, Lincoln's former private secretary, and made public in 1872. "Lincoln, at one of the most difficult moments in the war, was [privately] grappling to understand the meaning of the conflict in a new manner."⁸⁶ In his "Meditation," he laid out the great Bayesian dilemma that "God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war, it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party – and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to effect His purpose."⁸⁷ With extraordinary humility, Lincoln saw himself as merely a puppet, with the Almighty as a puppet master beyond his comprehension and events transpiring just as God intended.

Lincoln also respected the significant place of religion in the national psyche and the religious ramifications of slavery and the Civil War. "Both [North and South] read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. . . The prayers of both could not be answered."⁸⁸ "All knew," Lincoln asserted, "that this interest [slavery] was, somehow, the cause of war." He then quoted Jesus saying to the disciples, "Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the

offense cometh.”⁸⁹ Lincoln then framed slavery as “one of those offenses which, in the Providence of God, must needs come . . . that He gives to both North and South, this terrible war, as the woe due to those by whom the offense came.”⁹⁰ God’s judgment then was not just of the South, but of the whole country.

Lincoln follows this with his strongest words on slavery, the war, and the consequences:

Fondly do we hope – fervently do we pray – that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue, until all the wealth piled by the bondsman’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, “the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether.”⁹¹

His condemnation for the atrocities and violence of the Civil War was directed at the North as well as the South. To the point of the war, both tolerated and benefitted from the evil of slavery, then both prosecuted the war and both suffered the consequences. By asserting that guilt lay with both, Lincoln draws a stark contrast from the language used during his first inaugural address and thereby sets a tone of conciliation and compromise that would be critical for Reconstruction to lead the nation to a higher ground.

A New Beginning

“Lincoln, and those who heard him that day, understood his Second Inaugural not as an ending but as a new beginning,” writes White.⁹² He led by example in this case. Instead of giving into the temptation of delivering a victory speech on behalf of the Union, he was restrained. He laid the foundation for a Reconstruction of cooperation and growth. Despite the vast destruction wrought by war, there was a faint sense of optimism in the speech that pointed toward a brighter future.

Lincoln understood the issue of slavery was linked to deep emotions and well-established religious views that could make it difficult for Northerners to show any kind of consideration for the defeated South. Lincoln feared that this emotion and desire for retribution would prevent the country from becoming truly united again and from dealing reasonably with the difficult tasks of Reconstruction. With his Second Inaugural Address, he sought to give Americans a framework for understanding the war that would enable them to move forward not as North and South, victor and vanquished, God’s favored and God’s cursed, but as the United States of America, a country judged by God for accepting slavery but permitted to move forward and rebuild with civility and humility.

“We must extinguish our resentments if we expect harmony and union. There is too much desire on the part of some of our very good friends to be masters, to interfere with and dictate to those States, to treat the people not as fellow-citizens; there is too little respect for their rights. I do not sympathize in those feelings.’

He was once more in fact, as he had always been in spirit, President of the whole *United States*.”⁹³

Abraham Lincoln delivered his last speech just three days before his assassination. The Unionist government in Louisiana had ignored his private entreaties to extend the ballot to freedmen, and Lincoln sought to assuage the outraged Radical Republicans in Congress. He defended his conciliatory approach to Reconstruction by noting that responsibility for it belonged to both the executive and legislative branches. At the same time, he joined in criticizing the Southerners for their restriction of the franchise, saying “I would myself prefer that it were now conferred on the very intelligent, and on those who served our cause as soldiers.”⁹⁴ Historian David Herbert Donald wrote, “This was an opinion Lincoln had previously expressed in private, but never before had any American President publicly announced that he was in favor of Negro suffrage.”⁹⁵ In discussing this speech, William Lee Miller noted that hovering in the audience was an enraged John Wilkes Booth. On hearing Lincoln support voting rights for African-Americans, Booth exclaimed violently, “That means nigger citizenship. . . That is the last speech he will ever give.”⁹⁶

Lincoln’s assassination, just over a month after his second inauguration, offers one of history’s great ‘what ifs.’ Would Reconstruction have been different if Lincoln had survived? Would the civility of his second inaugural address have taken root in the ashes of the war? Could Lincoln have crafted a compromise that made room for the rebels without compromising the rights and futures of the four million freedmen who were new U.S. citizens? That would have been heroic leadership for the ages.

Instead, the Radical Republicans abandoned Lincoln’s plan for Reconstruction, substituting policies that punished the South and deepened the rift between regions. The resentment and bitterness in the South was so great that when a dispute arose over electoral ballots during the controversial Presidential race of 1876, it nearly ignited a second civil war. The compromise resolution ended Reconstruction and ushered in a lengthy period of reactionary retribution.

Suddenly free from the yoke of an oppressive Union Army, Southerners lashed out at the most obvious and convenient target for revenge – the population of former slaves. By the early 1880s, “Jim Crow” laws started emerging, mandating discrimination against African-Americans. Over the following decade, South Carolina Governor and U.S. Senator “Pitchfork Ben” Tillman led the effort to enact these laws across the South, solidifying the color line and undermining Lincoln’s promise of civility and compromise for nearly a century.

⁶⁷Philip Van Doren Stern. *The Life and Writings of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Random House, 1942), 644.

⁶⁸Quoted in William Lee Miller, *President Lincoln: The Duty of a Statesman* (New York: Knoph, 2008), 36.

⁶⁹Quoted in Miller, 36-37.

⁷⁰Nathaniel W. Stephenson, *Abraham Lincoln and the Union* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1920), 84-85.

⁷¹Roy P. Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. 2 (New Brunswick, New Jersey: 1953) accessed via <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/l/lincoln/>, 461-469.

⁷²David Herbert Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), 206.

⁷³Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 2005), 747.

⁷⁴Basler, Vol. 7, 332-333.

⁷⁵Goodwin, xvii.

⁷⁶Quoted in Donald, 456.

⁷⁷James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 772.

⁷⁸Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 2.34-46.

⁷⁹Basler, Vol. 8, 96.

⁸⁰Basler, 101.

⁸¹Ronald C. White. *Lincoln's Greatest Speech: The Second Inaugural*, (New York: Simon and Shuster, 2002), 32.

⁸²White, 48.

⁸³Basler, Vol. 7, 281-283.

⁸⁴Basler, 332.

⁸⁵White, 125.

⁸⁶White, 123.

⁸⁷Basler, Vol. 6, 327-368.

⁸⁸Basler, Vol. 8, 333.

⁸⁹Matt. 18:7, KJV.

⁹⁰Basler, Vol. 8, 332-333.

⁹¹Basler, Vol. 8, 332-333.

⁹²White, 178.

⁹³Adams, 269.

⁹⁴Quoted in Donald, 585.

⁹⁵Donald, 585.

⁹⁶Quoted in Miller, 417.

WOODROW WILSON: THE PRICE OF INCIVILITY

Shall we or any other free people hesitate to accept this great duty? Dare we reject it and break the heart of the world?

– Woodrow Wilson, July 10, 1919, speaking to the U.S. Senate about the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations⁹⁷

In his youth, Woodrow Wilson became enamored of the great orators of British democracy, including Edmund Burke and William Pitt the Elder. Wilson's original fascination was the poetic imagination of the elder Pitt that "set his words fairly aglow with beauty."⁹⁸ It grew into affection for parliamentary democracy that marked Wilson's entire career.

Wilson earned his undergraduate degree in 1879 from the College of New Jersey at Princeton, where he studied history and politics. He studied law briefly at the University of Virginia but then left to "read the law" on his own and passed the bar examination in Georgia. Unhappy practicing law in Atlanta, he left again, this time to pursue a doctorate in "historical and political science" at The Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. After receiving his degree in 1886, he began teaching at Bryn Mawr College and then Wesleyan University. In 1889, he returned to the College of New Jersey as a Professor of Jurisprudence and Political Economy. Within a few years, he became by far the most popular lecturer at Princeton. He was thought to understand and care for the students more than any other faculty member, and every senior class between 1896 and 1903 chose him as their favorite professor.

During that period, Wilson became one of the best known and most powerful members of the faculty, while the school itself went through the most far-reaching changes in its entire history. In 1896, as it celebrated its sesquicentennial, the College officially became a University and formally took the name by which it had been known for some time, Princeton. As part of the celebration of these events, Professor Wilson gave a speech which brought him national recognition, effectively launched his political career, and refocused Princeton for generations to come. Titled "Princeton in the Nation's Service," the address established Wilson's argument that for a college "to do its right service, . . . the air of affairs should be admitted to all its classrooms. I do not mean the air of party politics, but the air of the world's transactions, the consciousness of the solidarity of the race, the sense of the duty of man toward man, of the presence of men in every problem, of the significance of truth for guidance as well as for knowledge, of the potency of ideas, of the promise and the hope that shine in the face of all knowledge." Wilson finished by articulating the themes that ended up defining the rest of his career, that "We dare not keep aloof and closet ourselves while a nation comes to its maturity. The days of glad expansion are gone; our life grows tense and difficult; our resource for the future lies in careful thought, providence, and a wise economy; and the school must be of the nation."⁹⁹

Wilson's chief rival on the Princeton Faculty was Classics Professor Andrew West, who happened to have had the honor and opportunity of organizing the anniversary celebrations at which Wilson gave his landmark speech. In 1900, Princeton established its Graduate School and named West – the University's most tireless and successful fundraiser – the Dean. Two years later, Wilson was elected as the new University President. Over the succeeding eight years, Wilson and West clashed at every turn over matters of university culture, academic practices, the location and nature of the buildings that would comprise the Graduate School, and of course, money. For the most part, the undergraduates and the core faculty backed Wilson, while the Graduate School faculty and students, the key Graduate School donors, and the University Trustees were in West's corner.

In 1908, West lost his most important and influential backer, former President Grover Cleveland, who had retired to Princeton and become one of the most powerful University Trustees. After this, the Board tried to force a peace upon the men by backing Wilson in a key vote. West would not back down. A year later, he won a half million-dollar bequest for the Graduate School that was conditioned on it being built according to his plan. This time, it was Wilson who refused to yield. He won the battle, Princeton lost the money, and Wilson lost what was left of his backing on the Board. When West brought in another \$2 million gift in 1910, Wilson was beat. With the backing of several wealthy and influential Trustees, he resigned as University President of Princeton and accepted the Democratic nomination for the Governorship of New Jersey. Well-known and popular throughout New Jersey, he won in a landslide.

At the time of his battle with West, Wilson was widely considered the nation's foremost expert on American political history. He knew well the classic works and civil values that shaped Washington and the other Founders, compelled Clay in his almost quixotic quests for compromise, and inspired Lincoln to a pivot from all-out war to conciliatory peace. He knew this history, but was seemingly immune to its lessons. In the battle between Wilson and West, there was no real effort on either side to find compromise or seek higher ground. It was hostile, long-lasting, personal, and even petty, despite the great stakes. As a result, Wilson biographer Arthur S. Link saw it as a harbinger of Wilson's later and equally fierce battle with Senator Henry Cabot Lodge over the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations.¹⁰⁰ There the stakes were even higher, but again seemed overshadowed by the personal animosity and the unwillingness – perhaps even the inability – to yield regardless of the circumstances. Where the battle with West killed Wilson's University Presidency, the battle with Lodge killed the treaties, Wilson's national Presidency, and for all intents and purposes, him.

With his election as New Jersey Governor, Wilson experienced a meteoric rise on the National stage. Long thought of as a southern conservative Democrat, he governed as a reformer, with a progressive political agenda. In 1912 he won the Democratic nomination for President, running on a "New Freedom" platform that aimed to revitalize the American economy. Fortuitously, Wilson faced a divided Republican party. Former Republican President Theodore Roosevelt had grown tired of the passive conservatism that seemed to define his protégé and successor, incumbent William Howard Taft. When he failed to convince Taft to change or to retire in favor of him, Roosevelt decided to run as an independent. He chartered the

the short-lived Progressive or “Bull Moose” Party and split the Republican vote. Because of this Wilson was able to win the election with only 42% of the vote.

Though he did not have much of a mandate to govern, President Wilson did have a platform that provided a strong political program, Democratic control of both Houses of Congress, and a belief in the rightness of parliamentary government. Styling himself as an *ersatz* Prime Minister, Wilson prepared a legislative program, personally guided Congressmen in the drafting of bills and the navigation of the legislative process, and mediated among various factions when disputes inevitably arose over principles and details. Among his many first-term achievements were the Federal Trade Commission Act, a strengthening of the Clayton Anti-Trust Act, and the Federal Reserve Act, the first major reform of the national banking system since the Civil War, which created the framework that still regulates the nation’s banks, credits, and money supply today.

In July, 1914, war broke out in Europe. In August, President Wilson delivered his Message on Neutrality, explaining to the nation,

“The effect of the war upon the United States will depend upon what American citizens say and do. Every man who really loves America will act and speak in the true spirit of neutrality, which is the spirit of impartiality and fairness and friendliness to all concerned... The people of the United States are drawn from many nations, and chiefly from the nations now at war. It is natural and inevitable that there should be the utmost variety of sympathy and desire among them with regard to the issues and circumstances of the conflict. Some will wish one nation, others another, to succeed in the momentous struggle. It will be easy to excite passion and difficult to allay it... Such divisions among us would be fatal to our peace of mind and might seriously stand in the way of the proper performance of our duty as the one great nation at peace, the one people holding itself ready to play a part of impartial mediation and speak the counsels of peace and accommodation, not as a partisan, but as a friend.”¹⁰¹

America initially did remain neutral, trading goods with both sides and trusting that each would respect the neutral shipping lines. Over time, however, German torpedoes took their toll on American shipping and American lives in a series of attacks on merchant and passenger ships on the high seas. After winning reelection in 1916 as “The Man Who Kept Us Out of the War,” Wilson declared war on Germany the following April. In his address to the nation, he stressed that the U.S. was not fighting to win, but for only moral reasons – to end war, extend freedom over tyranny, and “make the world safe for democracy.” “It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war...but the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts, -- for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments...for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.”¹⁰²

Le Bon Dieu n'Avait que Dix!

In January 1918, Wilson first outlined his Fourteen Points for achieving a lasting peace in Europe during a speech before Congress, a speech which later prompted French President Georges Clemenceau to note that ‘The Good Lord only had ten!’ Of course the Lord did not have The Inquiry, a study group set up for Wilson by his closest advisor, Edward “Colonel” House, to lay out war aims and peace terms. The group comprised approximately 150 advisors and originally began its work in secret. It produced at least 1,200 maps and almost 2,000 separate reports, which analyzed U.S. and Allied global policy and economic, social, and political facts relevant to establishing peace. It covered geopolitical issues and general ideology required to sustain peace, including the end of secret treaties, a reduction in armaments, freedom of the seas, the right to self-determination, the restoration of territories conquered during the war, and the creation of a world organization to resolve future conflicts.

In presenting the Fourteen Points to Congress, Wilson explained, “What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression. All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us.”¹⁰³ No major world leader had ever set out such lofty aims or called for a “peace without victory.” Wilson felt strongly that if the peace negotiations were not informed by such attributes, war would inevitably return to Europe.

The Fourteen Points, translated and dropped behind enemy lines, formed the basis for Germany and her allies agreeing to the Armistice. Notably though, all of this was done without any consultation with the Allied powers alongside whom the U.S. was fighting. When they started to learn about Wilson’s ideas and commitments, England, France, and Italy were not pleased. They were not interested in pursuing some idealistic academic exercise. They had spent four years, millions of lives, and billions of dollars fighting. They wanted total victory and in order to recover from all the devastation, they needed the reparations they felt Germany owed them for the damages it had caused.

Presidents have two options when they need to negotiate a Treaty – do it yourself or leave it to professional diplomats – but the U.S. Constitution establishes only one path to ratification, “by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate....provided two thirds of the Senators present concur.” As Alexander Hamilton points out in Federalist 75, this mechanism is used when the result is of as critical a concern to minorities as it is to any transient or permanent majority. In other words, whether the President’s party has a majority in the Senate or not, the opposition cannot be ignored. That makes the other party’s Ranking Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee the single most important player in the Treaty process after the lead negotiator.

In this case, President Wilson chose to be his own lead negotiator. The core values at stake, and the key points he wanted made and included in the treaty, belonged to him. He

wanted to be at the table to advocate for them and protect them personally. The ranking Republican and Committee Chairman, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts, asked to be part of the delegation. Allowing him to participate in the process would have vested him with a significant interest in shepherding the resulting treaty through the Senate successfully. Therefore, taking Lodge along would not only have been consistent with the Constitutional process, it would have been savvy politics on Wilson's part. But Wilson refused Lodge's request.

At first glance, this decision appears to stand in contrast to Wilson's apparent record of collaboration with Congressional leaders earlier in his Presidency, but it does not. Wilson was a hard partisan and the leaders with whom he worked in his early years as President were fellow Democrats. In addition, Wilson saw himself as a Prime Minister, *leading* his party's legislators, rather a coequal required to *collaborate* with them. Therefore, the West rivalry is a better cognate for the Lodge relationship than Wilson's prior record of Congressional relations. Further, as was the case at Princeton, Wilson and his rival loathed one another. The President saw Lodge as a personal as well as a political enemy and feared he had his own, hostile, political agenda. For his part, Lodge resented Wilson's "spirit of petty tyranny and his determination to have his own way."¹⁰⁴ He admitted to "never having expected to hate a political adversary with the hatred he felt towards Wilson."¹⁰⁵

Wilson's hostility toward Lodge may be understandable, but Wilson compounded his error by failing to include *any* senior Republican in the Peace Commission, not even such widely respected men as former President William Howard Taft or former Senator and Cabinet Member Elihu Root. The latter would have been an ideal addition to the team, having built a strong reputation in Europe as Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of State and having won the 1912 Nobel Peace Prize for his work on international arbitration and cooperation. Nonetheless, the President shunned all outside counsel and took only a small coterie of close political friends and allies to Paris to support him.

President Wilson was greeted with great fanfare in Paris, and his idealistic objectives were widely praised, but his Allied negotiating partners were unyielding in the insistence on punitive reparations from Germany. Looking towards the future, Wilson knew that to crush economically Germany so would only set the stage for another war in the future. As a countermeasure to this likelihood, Wilson called for a "general association of nations... formed on the basis of covenants designed to create mutual guarantees of the political independence and territorial integrity of States, large and small equally."¹⁰⁶ It was his hope that such an organization would facilitate the peaceful resolution of disputes as a better alternative to war, but could also provide collective security should war be unavoidable.

In the aftermath of the War, such a "League of Nations" was very popular in Europe, but many felt it should be established independent of the Peace Treaty. Wilson disagreed, believing that if they were not linked, the League would never be created. He felt so strongly on this issue that he even threatened to back out of the peace negotiations, and on this point he would win out. He chaired the committee organized to draft the League of Nations charter and it was included in

the Treaty of Versailles. After these successes Wilson returned to the United States to seek Consent from the Senate, despite having rejected its Advice.

The League was popular with the American public too, but not with the press or Congress. Opposition to it had begun even before Wilson had left for Europe. Not surprisingly, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, one Henry Cabot Lodge, led the opposition. Apart from personal animosity toward the President, he and his allies had significant, legitimate concerns that membership in the League would not only be costly for the United States, but that it would also impede on American sovereignty, limiting the nation's ability to defend its own interests and risking further entanglement in the cauldron of European politics.

Wilson's advisors encouraged the President to take a more open, constructive approach as he returned from Paris to try to sell the Treaty of Versailles to the U.S. Senate – in other words, to employ civility as a martial art rather than “beating” the Senators about the head and shoulders with his intellect, moral superiority, and bullying attitude. Wilson was scheduled to stop in Boston on his way back to Washington and “Colonel” House, perhaps the most diplomatic and open-minded of Wilson's inner circle, urged him to be conciliatory and understated. Since he was scheduled to have a dinner with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in Washington, House counseled Wilson to “complement them by making your first explanation of affairs over here to them, and confine your Boston remarks to generalities.”¹⁰⁷

The Boston visit was even more awkward because it was Henry Cabot Lodge's hometown. Republican leaders, recognizing how important it was that the U.S. find a way to ratify the Treaty despite all the reservations they had about the way it had been negotiated and the burden of its terms, also tried to keep things calm and positive. Massachusetts Governor Calvin Coolidge tried to persuade Lodge to be civil and even solicitous in his remarks, perhaps to say that the Massachusetts public was in favor of Peace and some sort of international organization despite great concerns about the proposed form. Coolidge's message was, “Our party is not an opposition party but a constructive party,” noting that “a negative never satisfies.”¹⁰⁸

Instead of heeding the advice, President Wilson returned to the persona of Princeton Professor, lecturing Lodge in public not to oppose the Treaty and the League of Nations. “Any man who thinks that America will take part in giving the world any such rebuff and disappointment... does not know America. I invite him to test the sentiments of the nation.”¹⁰⁹ The Associated Press reported the next day that Wilson had been on American soil only three hours before “he threw down the gauntlet to those who distrust the proposed concert of governments based on the American ideals, which had won the war for justice and humanity.”¹¹⁰

In his remarks to the Democratic National Committee at the White House in February, 1919, Wilson further alienated Republican opponents, commenting that, “Of all the blind and little provincial people, they are the littlest and most contemptible.... The whole impulse of the modern time is against them. They are going to have the most conspicuously contemptible names in history. The gibbets that they are going to be erected on by future historians will

scrape the heavens, they will be so high.”¹¹¹ Wilson played into the hands of his worst adversaries. As the war of words increased, his loyal Secret Service man, Edmund Starling, concluded that “The president had no one to blame but himself for his predicament. His initial failure to appoint men like former president Taft or Elihu Root to the Peace Commission was one blunder. His electioneering call for a Democratic Congress that had ‘stirred up a hornet’s nest’ was even more serious.”¹¹²

On July 10, 1919, Wilson broke with longstanding tradition and delivered the Treaty in person to the Senate, summarizing its key elements in his speech, “America must remain the champion of the right... There can be no question of our ceasing to be a world power. The only question is whether we can refuse the moral leadership that is offered us, whether we shall accept or reject the confidence of the world.”¹¹³ Lodge knew he could not match this president as a speaker so he did not try. He simply took a deliberative approach instead of acquiescing to the quick vote Wilson was hoping for. Lodge read the entire treaty into the Record through a two week period and then held hearings on it.

As summer turned to autumn and the hearings dragged on, Wilson shifted his strategy and launched a tour to promote the Treaty directly to the American people. In that ‘pre-modern’ age, a President would visit key states by train, traveling from city to city making speeches that would then be reported in local newspapers. Wilson was particularly eloquent in St. Louis, saying to the returned soldiers who were in the crowd that if the Senate rejected the treaty, “You are betrayed. You fought for something you did not get.”¹¹⁴ He went on to forecast, “And there will come some time, in the vengeful Providence of God, another struggle in which, not a few hundred thousand fine men from America will have to die, but as many millions as are necessary to accomplish the final freedom.”¹¹⁵ Soon thereafter, as his tour continued, Wilson began to suffer a number of minor medical events that are believed to have been small strokes. On October 2, after returning to the White House, the President suffered a massive, debilitating stroke. For the next seventeen months, until the end of his term, Wilson’s wife Edith, his physician Dr. Grayson, and his assistant Joe Tumulty, conspired to keep his true condition a secret.

Wilson had made the decision early on to involve Edith in his official affairs. She was one of his closest advisors and had great influence over his campaign to win ratification of the Treaty of Versailles in the U.S. Senate. If Wilson set the tone in his relations with Lodge and other Republicans, Edith fanned the flames. As Phyllis Lee Levin noted in *Edith and Wilson*, “The mirror the couple now held up to themselves obscured all blemishes. They saw themselves as emissaries on a mission – Wilson hoping to lead the world out of chaos, and to be hailed as a Messiah.”¹¹⁶ They were unable to conceive their reverse image as a ‘virtuously imperial pair making what they obviously felt was an almost apocalyptic pilgrimage.’¹¹⁷ “The eventual defeat of the treaty, in the Senate, was attributed by Edith to that squall that came out of the blue, instigated by the jealousy of one man, by Henry Cabot Lodge.”¹¹⁸

By ignoring domestic political realities – and the Constitutional process as well – Wilson badly miscalculated. The linkage that he demanded to protect the League from European political machinations worked against him in the U.S. Senate. Because the two different parts of

the single Treaty of Versailles could not be separated, the Senate ended up rejecting the Peace of Paris that most Americans favored and that Lodge and most other Senators were inclined to support. The entire effort was consistent with Wilson's pattern of rejecting the use of civility as a weapon in his political maneuvers. Had he taken a different approach, listening, accommodating, fostering trust and respect, and seeking out understanding, the results might have been altogether different. As John Milton Cooper noted, "President Woodrow Wilson's unavailing effort in 1919 and 1920 to gain Senate consent to the Treaty of Versailles – which provided for full membership in the League of Nations – stands to this day as perhaps the greatest Presidential failure in the politics of foreign policy."¹¹⁹

Wilson may have lost the peace, bungling the treaty negotiations and damning the League of Nations to failure before it was even launched, but his active disdain for the power and propriety of civility did produce some positive outcomes. By placing the U.S. in the middle of European affairs, even so ham-handedly, Wilson advanced the effort started by Theodore Roosevelt to make the United States a major world player on a permanent basis. In addition, his League of Nations provided a template for the far more successful United Nations Organization. And his single-mindedness, both in the process of creating it and in the internal processes he built into it, served as effective admonitions for his successors. In setting up the process that created the UN, President Franklin D. Roosevelt made sure that every party had a seat at the table and a say from the podium. In operation, the organization has run the same way. By sacrificing institutional efficiency in favor of sustainable institutional civility, the UN has managed to survive as both an international meeting place and a global provider of peace-keeping and humanitarian services.

In fact, the entire debacle had a profound impact on Franklin Roosevelt, and informed much of what he did, not just his sponsorship of the U.N. Roosevelt had been Wilson's Assistant Secretary of the Navy and had traveled with him on one of his trips back from a session of the Peace Conference. With Wilson's experience in mind, Roosevelt behaved very differently during his own Presidency when he faced a series of remarkably parallel events. As Europe careered toward war in the late 1930s, Roosevelt talked Wilson's language of neutrality, but prepared his Administration, and the nation, for the involvement he knew would be unavoidable. When war came, Roosevelt did not even pretend to seek anything other than total victory. In planning for peace, Roosevelt started early, involved a broad, bipartisan cross-section of leaders, and put success above perfection on his list of priorities.

"Only at the end of the 1930s did many Americans rediscover the virtues of Wilson's approach to world affairs.... Roosevelt was a better politician than Wilson, having learned from Wilson's mistakes and he took care to design the United Nations in a manner that catered to Americans' lingering distrust of foreigners. By the late twentieth century, Wilson belonged to the World. Yet the greatest change had come over his own country. The nation that had turned away from the league in Wilson's day, and from responsibility for world order and peace, now accepted, quite matter-of-factly, its role at the center of world affairs.... [Wilson] asserted, 'We are provincials no longer. The tragic events of

the thirty months of vital turmoil which we have just passed made us citizens of the world. There can be no turning back.”

– H.W. Brands¹²⁰

⁹⁷ J. W. Schulte Nordholt, *Woodrow Wilson: A Life for World Peace* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 374.

⁹⁸ H.W. Brands, *Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Times Books, 2003), 7.

⁹⁹ Woodrow Wilson, “Princeton in the Nation’s Service.” *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Volume 10: 1896-1898*. Ed. Arthur S. Link (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

¹⁰⁰ Arthur S. Link, *The American Epoch: A History of the United States Since the 1890’s* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), 126-127.

¹⁰¹ Woodrow Wilson, “Message on Neutrality.” Miller Center. University of Virginia, 20 Aug 1914. Web. 9 Aug 2013. <<http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3791>>.

¹⁰² Woodrow Wilson, “Transcript of Joint Address to Congress Leading to a Declaration of War Against Germany (1917).” Ourdocuments.gov. National Archives, 2 Apr 1917. Web. 9 Aug 2013. <<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=61&page=transcript>>.

¹⁰³ Woodrow Wilson, “Speech on the Fourteen Points,” Congressional Record, 65th Congress 2nd Session, 1918, pp. 680-681.

¹⁰⁴ Phyllis Lee Levin, *Edith and Woodrow*, (New York: A Lisa Drew Book, Scribner, 2001), 270.

¹⁰⁵ Phyllis Lee Levin, *Edith and Woodrow*, (New York: A Lisa Drew Book, Scribner, 2001), 270.

¹⁰⁶ Woodrow Wilson, “Speech on the Fourteen Points,” Congressional Record, 65th Congress 2nd Session, 1918, pp. 680-681.

¹⁰⁷ *The Paris Peace Conference*, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919 suppl., 11:509

¹⁰⁸ Calvin Coolidge to Henry Cabot Lodge, February 19, 1919, Henry Cabot Lodge Papers, box 50.

¹⁰⁹ Woodrow Wilson, “Address of President Wilson at Boston, Mass., on His Return from Europe,” February 24, 1919, *The Messages and Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, 2:638-47.

¹¹⁰ Jonathan Daniels, *The Time Between Wars* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1966), 25.

¹¹¹ H.W. Brands, *Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Times Books, 2003), 109.

¹¹² Phyllis Lee Levin, *Edith and Woodrow*, (New York: A Lisa Drew Book, Scribner, 2001), 263.

¹¹³ Woodrow Wilson, “Speech on the Fourteen Points,” Congressional Record, 65th Congress 2nd Session, 1918, pp. 680-681

¹¹⁴ Alexander L. George and Juliette L. George, *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House: A Personality Study* (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 1964), 294.

¹¹⁵ Woodrow Wilson, “An Address in St. Louis.” *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Volume 63*. Ed. Arthur S. Link (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

¹¹⁶ Samuel Gompers, *Seventy Years of Life and Labor* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press), 486.

¹¹⁷ Jonathan Daniels, *The Time Between Wars* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1966), 29.

¹¹⁸ Phyllis Lee Levin, *Edith and Woodrow*, (New York: A Lisa Drew Book, Scribner, 2001), 267.

¹¹⁹ John Milton Cooper, "The Versailles Treaty." *The Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency: Seventy-Six Case Studies in Presidential Leadership*. Ed. David Abshire (Westport: Praeger Publishers), 54.

¹²⁰ H.W. Brands, *Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Times Books, 2003), 136-139.

THE EVOLUTION OF FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT

“The force of nature known as Franklin Delano Roosevelt swept into the Presidency on March 4, 1933, and remained there until his death on April 12, 1945... By then the United States had become a world power and...the Presidency itself had undergone a fundamental transformation, replacing Congress as the principle energy source of the political system. Roosevelt was not solely responsible for these changes, but without him, American history would have been different, not just in its details, but in its larger contours.”

– Fred I. Greenstein¹²¹

On November 8, 1932, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected President of the United States. With the United States in the depths of the Great Depression, with millions unemployed and farms, firms, and financial institutions around the nation failing on a daily basis, defeated President Herbert Hoover reached out to Roosevelt to collaborate on the nation’s behalf during the interregnum between the election and inauguration. FDR, a lifelong Democrat and ferocious partisan, refused. Though he is now renowned as an experimenter willing to try anything to bring relief to his fellow Americans, Roosevelt sat on his hands for four months rather than be seen consorting with his political enemies. When he first came to the Presidency, the father of the New Deal put political purity over not only civility, but the needs of his new constituents.

In retrospect, this tone of partisan battle defined the first five years of Roosevelt’s Presidency. Even as he tried everything he and his aides could think of to relieve the Depression, he did so as a warrior, seeking to unite the nation against Republicans just as much economic hardship. He welcomed the fight, defending himself with equal vigor against dissonant cries of “Socialist” and “Fascist,” building what became the prototypical modern political coalition, and feuding so tirelessly with the Supreme Court that he tried to change the Constitution in an effort to bring it to heel. The “Court-packing” plan was a dismal failure and dealt Roosevelt a major political blow, but it was hardly the first time Franklin Roosevelt had to pick himself up and regroup.

We have already noted that some of America’s most heroic political leaders were shaped for their challenging future, in part, by facing and overcoming serious initial setbacks. Had fate allowed them to hike a gentler path, one might wonder if the great leadership they later demonstrated could have even been possible. Roosevelt was no exception. Over the course of just three years, he suffered a series of trials in his personal and professional lives that, in retrospect, laid the foundation for all his later success. First was his wife, Eleanor’s, discovery of his affair with her social secretary, Lucy Mercer. Eleanor wanted a divorce, but was talked out of it by Roosevelt’s political advisor, Louis Howe, who argued that it would end Roosevelt’s career.

Having kept the affair a secret and his marriage intact to all external appearances, Roosevelt continued his rapid political ascent. In 1920, he was drafted as the Vice Presidential nominee to Ohio's James Cox on the Democrat's ill-fated national ticket. Less than a year after his comprehensive defeat at the hands of Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge, Roosevelt faced his most difficult challenge – a rare adult attack of polio. After nearly killing him, the disease left Roosevelt totally paralyzed from the waist down. Months of convalescence followed, with Louis Howe actually moving into the Roosevelt household in an effort to keep his political future alive.

Though their marriage was over in the conventional sense, the Roosevelts – under Howe's tutelage – became a potent political partnership. The "Happy Warrior" speech at the 1924 Democratic National Convention announced FDR's return to the hustings. In 1928, he was narrowly elected Governor of New York. Four years later – his paralysis still a closely held secret – FDR was elected President. In his inaugural address, he spoke to a crippled nation with a strength hard won from his own experience with crippling illness: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

Roosevelt's first hundred days in office established that measure as the standard by which all subsequent Presidents would be judged. Roosevelt knew himself to be a poor manager, so he brought with him an inner circle of excellent managers to compensate. He did not know what to do to meet the challenges facing the nation, so using Executive Orders, he empowered his team to do just about everything they could think of. Programs that seemed to work were continued. Those that did not were quietly canceled and immediately replaced by another experiment. In assessing his performance, James MacGregor Burns wrote that he acted, "with no set program or definite philosophy of government."¹²² He did what he thought would work. But throughout, he kept his partisan edge well-honed. By the late 1930s, the New Deal had exiled or alienated a significant portion of the nation's experienced civic and political leaders.

Of course the Great Depression was not just an American phenomenon, but a world-wide one, in part because the U.S. responded to the initial downturn with the Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930. This combative, isolationist tactic was designed to protect American jobs and industry, but actually caused far more harm than good, crushing international trade and spreading the pain of the Depression to other trade-dependent nations who felt forced to retaliate with their own punitive tariff regimes. Roosevelt's Reciprocal Tariff Act of 1934 improved the legal situation, but it could not undo the economic devastation. As a result, by the mid-1930s, the U.S. not only had its own economic travails, but also looked out at a world filled with tension and the early rumblings of a second world war. Americans responded by becoming increasingly isolationist. By 1937, two-thirds of Americans polled by Gallup said the nation had been wrong to intervene in the First World War. Reflecting these feelings, Congress passed a series of ever-stricter "Neutrality Acts" limiting Presidential prerogative in international activity.

Roosevelt was an internationalist by nature, and by virtue of his position was far more aware of how serious the threats to freedom and democracy were around the world. On October 5, 1937, he took a first step away from the popular American sentiment of neutrality and non-intervention when he gave his Quarantine Speech in Chicago, which encouraged peace loving

nations to “quarantine” aggressor nations and apply economic pressure to them in an effort to force them to change their behavior. He had ordered just such steps against Japan, placing an embargo on aircraft exports following the Japanese invasion of China the previous July. Thus, Roosevelt began to take steps in the direction of becoming a major player on the global arena.

By 1938, war threatened in Europe as well as East Asia. Germany’s Nazi Chancellor, Adolf Hitler, threatened peace throughout central Europe, seizing Austria and the portion of Czechoslovakia known as the Sudetenland. In response, Great Britain’s Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, pursued a policy of “peace” and appeasement, not only accepting Hitler’s aggression, but also recognizing Italy’s fascist conquest of Ethiopia in defiance of the League of Nations. Despite facing a new economic slowdown which foreshadowed an even deeper depression to come, Roosevelt responded to all of this by asking Congress for a 20% increase in naval production.

Like other great Presidents before him who found themselves facing worsening and rapidly changing circumstances, FDR performed an extraordinary political pivot. He turned away from his partisan-fueled New Deal policies and began pursuing measures to prepare the nation for war – on a bipartisan basis. He told his leading New Dealer, Harry Hopkins, “I’ve been Dr. ‘New Deal.’ Now I am Dr. ‘Win the War’.” Hopkins replied, “To the hell with the ‘New Deal’, I am your man to win the war.”¹²³ Roosevelt, Hopkins, and the rest of the inner circle employed charm, guile, and civility to recruit those who would best serve the cause, regardless of party affiliation or prior political offense against the Roosevelt regime. They initiated a series of efforts that over the succeeding two years would turn the tide of isolationism at top of American society and create the opportunity for FDR to break precedent and run for a third term.

In late 1938, Roosevelt held a meeting of his military advisors to share his plan to bolster Britain’s defenses with thousands of aircraft. Only the newly appointed Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army objected, pointing out to Roosevelt that the aircraft were not yet proven and that logistical and training difficulties meant that even if they could be delivered, Britain would not have the pilots to fly them nor the resources to keep them fueled and serviceable. Better, the brigadier general counseled, to invest in a broad-based and balanced program to strengthen U.S. defenses. The military brass saw a career ending. Roosevelt saw a courageous expert he could trust. Less than a year later, George C. Marshall was given three more stars and made Army Chief of Staff for the duration.

When Hitler’s armies moved into the rest of Czechoslovakia in March, 1939, Roosevelt called a major meeting of congressional leaders at the White House, seeking modifications to the Neutrality Acts so he would have the power and the purse to prepare the nation for war. He did not have the votes. In September, Germany invaded Poland and Great Britain and France declared war on Germany. Again Roosevelt returned to Congress concerned that the current Neutrality Acts could have the effect of aiding the Axis Powers – the aggressor nations – despite their explicit objective not to do so. Finally on November 4, 1939, a new Neutrality Act was passed, repealing the Acts of 1935 and 1937, allowing arms trade with belligerent nations, and effectively ended the arms embargo that was strangling Great Britain and the allies.

Throughout the spring of 1940, Roosevelt quietly laid the groundwork needed to put the U.S. on a war footing. He strengthened the Bureau of the Budget and recruited key business leaders – most of them Republican – to various advisory posts and committees that would eventually become the basis for control of a war economy. In June, Dr. Vannevar Bush, head of the Carnegie Institute for Science, convinced the President to create a National Defense Research Committee to ensure effective communication between the scientific community and the military. As Chairman, Bush became, in effect, the first Presidential science advisor. Roosevelt had been concerned about the wartime importance of scientific research since receiving a letter from Dr. Albert Einstein the previous autumn, warning of German progress in developing an atomic bomb. He gave Bush broad authority to coordinate all American scientific, engineering, and medical research, starting with the Manhattan Project to develop an atomic bomb before the Germans. This role was formalized in mid-1941, when Roosevelt established the Office of Scientific Research and Development under Bush's leadership. From this position, Bush guided and enabled thousands of research programs developing new weapons, technologies, and methods to further the war effort. After the war was over, Grand Admiral Karl Doenitz, head of the German Navy, claimed that it was America's scientific research effort that actually enabled the Allies to win.

The other thing demanding FDR's attention during the summer of 1940 was the coming Presidential race. Though no prior President had ever served more than two terms, there were no obvious candidates in the Democratic Party other than Franklin Roosevelt. On the Republican side, the contest was initially dominated by established Republican isolationists from Congress, but the changing international scene eventually gave little-known internationalist business executive Wendell Willkie the nomination at the Republican National Convention at the end of June. At the beginning of July, however, Roosevelt outflanked Willkie, reaching out to two GOP elder statesmen, former Republican cabinet Secretaries Henry Stimson and Frank Knox, and installing them in the War and Navy Departments respectively. In effect, FDR created a bipartisan war cabinet in a nation still, nominally, at peace. A few days later, on July 16, Roosevelt made the long-expected announcement that he would run for reelection.

In September, just two months before the election, Roosevelt took another major step toward war. He agreed to give fifty "surplus," WWI-vintage U.S. destroyers to Britain for use protecting freighter convoys delivering food and war materiel across the North Atlantic. In exchange, the U.S. received 99-year leases on naval bases in Newfoundland and the Caribbean.

Every one of these moves bore a political price for Roosevelt, costs he managed through an active process of civil engagement with all sectors of American society. Isolationists replaced Republicans as FDR's political bogeymen. Working across party lines with internationalist Republicans, Roosevelt slowly built a constituency for turning the United States into "the great arsenal of democracy" and simultaneously preparing it to defend itself when war eventually made its way to American shores.

In December, Chamberlain's replacement as Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, wrote Roosevelt what became known as the "Long Letter." In it, Churchill made the case that the

threat from Nazi submarines to merchant shipping could only be overcome if American shipping and naval forces cooperated with the British in the Atlantic. He also confessed that Britain could no longer pay for the assistance and the goods and weapons it was receiving from the U.S. Roosevelt answered with what may have been his most famous “Fireside Chat.” In advocating for an “arsenal of democracy,” he recounted the parable about the man who lent his neighbor a garden hose, so he could put out the fire in his house. The point being that the U.S. was only going to lend the hose, not fight the fire, but that if the U.S. failed to lend the hose, it might well end up with its own house on fire.

With the passage of the Lend Lease Act, Churchill wrote to Roosevelt on March 9, 1941, “Our blessings from the whole British Empire go out to you and the American nation for this very present help in this time of trouble.” Although, the Lend Lease Act was approved by Congress, and public reaction was mostly favorable, such isolationist voices as the *Chicago Tribune* charged that “Roosevelt’s undeclared naval war” was an effort to destroy the Republic. While this was base hyperbole, passage of the Lend Lease Act did move the United States from a position of strict neutrality to clear engagement on the side of Britain, a position the Germans acknowledged by turning their submarines loose against American merchant shipping.

On May 21, 1941, a German u-boat torpedoed the SS *Robin Moore*, a U.S. freighter in the North Atlantic. In another fireside chat, Roosevelt explained what the American merchant marine was doing in the North Atlantic and the limited steps the U.S. Navy was able to take to protect them. He disclosed the alarming fact that the Germans were sinking ships twice as fast as the British and Americans could replace them. He emphasized that victory required an increase in ship-building to help reduce losses on the seas. Despite all of this however, isolationism was still so widespread that just a few weeks later, Congress passed the extension of the draft by only one vote in the House of Representatives.

Franklin Roosevelt’s ultimate exercise of civility as a martial art may well be what became known as the Atlantic Charter. The product of Roosevelt’s first face-to-face meeting with Churchill, the Charter established America’s unequivocal support for Britain and its allies, but did so entirely in terms of shared, post-war objectives. This allowed the U.S. to cling to its claim of formal neutrality and protected Roosevelt from charges that he was declaring war without Congressional approval. The Charter was not an agreement, but a joint statement of understanding regarding eight key goals for peace. The lack of a formal, signed document allowed both Roosevelt and Churchill more freedom to accept ideas that were neither defined in detail nor always even understood in the same terms by all interested parties. At one level, the Charter was a triumph of rhetoric over substance. At another, it was just the explicit commitment to a shared destiny that both leaders sought.

A footnote to the Atlantic Charter is the place it was negotiated: on board the American heavy cruiser USS *Augusta*, at anchor off Naval Air Station Argentia, one of the first bases being constructed by the U.S. Navy under the 99-year lease of British territory. In contrast to the promise of the secret meeting’s code-name, *Riviera*, N.A.S. Argentia was located in the chilly waters of Placentia Bay, Newfoundland, Canada.

In as great a contrast, the primary military topic of discussion was an agreement to have the U.S. Navy take responsibility for escorting merchant convoys across the frigid North Atlantic as far east as Iceland. It was there, on September 4, that the American destroyer USS *Greer* reported being attacked by a German submarine and having returned fire. This incident allowed Roosevelt to claim provocation and initiate a new, even more aggressive policy. He ordered all U.S. Army and Navy forces patrolling areas of the Atlantic or escorting merchant ships to engage any and all German and Italian war vessels that crossed their paths. This new, “shoot on sight” policy was announced in such a way, and with such bipartisan support, that it had a major impact on isolationists in both the general public and Congress. A month later, Roosevelt asked Congress to revise the Neutrality Act to permit the arming of American merchant ships and to allow such ships to leave the neutral high seas and enter explicitly demarcated war zones. Congress complied. In the months between the Atlantic meeting and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States was at war in all but name.

That changed on December 7, 1941, when Japanese warplanes operating from six aircraft carriers, attacked the U.S. Pacific Fleet and surrounding airfields at Pearl Harbor. The Navy and Marine Corps were unable to get a single plane off the ground to fight off the attackers. The Army Air Corps managed only a handful. All eight of the Fleet’s battleships were sunk or disabled. The Japanese followed this surprise attack with similar strikes on American and British outposts in the Philippines, Hong Kong, Wake Island, Siam, and Malaya.

On December 8th, President Roosevelt appeared before a Joint Session of Congress to report on this “unprovoked and dastardly” attack by Japan on a “day that will live in infamy” and to seek a Declaration of War.¹²⁴ Three days later, Congress responded to Declarations of War from Germany and Italy and the “shadow war” in the North Atlantic came into the light. Prior to Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt had finessed the situation, defying American isolationists and doing everything he could to support the Allies and prepare the U.S. After the Japanese attack, there were no more isolationists; the United States was united in war.

Roosevelt had a phenomenal ability as a wartime leader to fully empower those he placed in charge of both the mobilization and the execution of the war. He freed the American military to practice the martial arts of war on the War Front, and he supported them by employing the martial art of civility on the Home Front and with the Allies. He never let his ego get in the way, he brought in only the best and the brightest scientists, managers, political leaders, and military advisors, regardless of party affiliation and regardless of their personal opinions of Roosevelt himself. When he got it wrong, he changed course and made it right.

When the war came, the President transformed his style of leadership, pivoting from “Dr. New Deal” to “Dr. Win-the-War.” He switched from using partisanship to divide the country and win political battles to using civility to unite the country and prepare it for war. In the three and a half years between that pivot and Pearl Harbor, FDR took a third-rate military power, with an army smaller than Portugal's, and turned it into the Arsenal of Democracy and the world's last, best hope for freedom. Because of that remarkable accomplishment, victory was achieved in less than four years. In the bargain America completed its own transformation from economic disaster to the most powerful nation the world has ever known.

¹²¹ Fred I. Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 12.

¹²² David M. Abshire, *A Call to Greatness: Challenging Our Next President* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2008), 32.

¹²³ Warren F. Kimball, "Franklin D. Roosevelt and World War II," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, March 2004, vol.34, No.1, 83-99.

¹²⁴ Freeman, Elsie, Wynell Burroughs Schamel and Jean West. "A Date Which Will Live in Infamy": The First Typed Draft of Franklin D. Roosevelt's War Address." *Social Education* 55, 7 (November/December 1991): 467-470.

DWIGHT EISENHOWER: THE CIVIL WARRIOR

I firmly determined that my mannerisms and speech in public would always reflect the cheerful certainty of victory – that any pessimism and discouragement I might ever feel would be reserved for my pillow. To translate this conviction into tangible results, I adopted a policy of circulating through the whole force to the full limit imposed by physical considerations, I did my best to meet everyone from general to private with a smile, a pat on the back, and a definite interest in his problems.

– Dwight D. Eisenhower, from the discarded introduction of “Crusade in Europe”¹²⁵

Eisenhower was elected president as a unifier, a man accustomed to listening, understanding other views, and building consensus to seek higher ground. This was the leadership process he had used to unite the Allies under his command in World War II and to integrate the U.S. Army into the Department of Defense as Chief of Staff. It was also the approach he used when the Board of Trustees of Columbia University brought him in as President, over the objections of the faculty, to dig the school out of a financial hole and secure its future. He employed the same skills on a much larger stage when President Harry Truman sent him back to Europe as Supreme Commander with orders to make the NATO Alliance functional. Ultimately, it was the approach Eisenhower used to unite the Republican Party behind his Presidential campaign and then unite the nation as it readjusted to a new and very different war – the Cold War.

Like many other great military and political leaders before him, Eisenhower had known failure, setback, and challenge. Merely a middling student in the celebrated West Point class of 1915, Eisenhower did not see action in World War I. This was a great personal disappointment and a real handicap to a military career set to be spent in a shrinking, peacetime Army. He spent 16 years stuck as a major. Much of that period, he was aide to General Douglas MacArthur, a difficult mentor at best. While MacArthur was Army Chief of Staff, Eisenhower was involved in the infamous attack that cleared the “Bonus Army” of destitute World War I veterans who were encamped on the National Mall. Eisenhower had strongly opposed the action, but not only had to help plan its execution, he also had to accompany MacArthur as the latter supervised the operation and then had the task of writing the justification. Then MacArthur took Eisenhower to The Philippines, where the two men again clashed repeatedly about the responsibilities of U.S. officers, the training program for the Philippine Army, and even the role of that force in the colonial context.

In retrospect though, these were mere minor disappointments. Eisenhower’s greatest test came much later, after his leadership skills and good reputation among his peers had already appeared to have rehabilitated his career. Shortly after Eisenhower was named Supreme Allied Commander in North Africa, American forces became engaged in their first major battle, against

General Erwin Rommel's celebrated *Afrika Korps*. It was a rout and the Americans ran. Eisenhower relieved the commander responsible, whom he had praised and empowered, and called in George S. Patton to fix things. Eisenhower's hand-written instructions to Patton, later memorialized in a memo, confirmed how serious the situation was. The entire Allied war effort was at stake and both Patton's and Eisenhower's commands were tenuous at best. "Patton was not to keep 'for one instant' any officer who was not up to the mark. 'We cannot afford to throw away soldiers and equipment...and effectiveness' out of unwillingness to injure 'the feelings of old friends,' Eisenhower had written. Ruthlessness of this kind toward acquaintances often required difficult moral courage, Eisenhower continued, but he expected Patton 'to be perfectly cold-blooded about it.'"¹²⁶

Beginning in North Africa, Eisenhower demonstrated his extraordinary capacity in the difficult challenge of coordinating the British, American, and French forces. This experience paid off later, as Eisenhower became responsible, successively, for the planning and execution of the invasions of Sicily, Italy proper, and then France, in the largest military operation in human history. Eisenhower believed that the cultivation of this inter-Allied cooperation was among his highest priorities. He wrote to his mentor, Army Chief of Staff George C. Marshall, that "The seeds of discord between ourselves and our British allies were sown as far back as when we read our little red school history books. My method is to drag up all these matters squarely into the open, discuss them frankly, and insist upon positive rather than negative action in furthering the purpose of Allied unity."¹²⁷

In explaining to Britain's Lord Louis Mountbatten the challenges involved in establishing unity in Allied command, Eisenhower showed just how much his philosophy of leadership was infused with the core elements of civility. "Patience, tolerance, frankness, absolute honesty in all dealings, particularly with all persons of the opposite nationality, and firmness, are absolutely essential.... [T]he thing you must strive for is the utmost in mutual respect and confidence among the group of seniors making up the allied command." Mountbatten's countryman, Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery, believed that Eisenhower's greatest strength emanated from his human qualities and magnetic personality. He explained that Eisenhower "merely has to smile at you, and you trust him at once. He is the very incarnation of sincerity."¹²⁸

According to biographer Michael Korda, Eisenhower "strongly believed that teamwork [was] not just pious rhetoric. He was a true believer in people, both the soldiers below him and his superiors. Ike wasn't a screamer like Patton. When he bore down on somebody the Eisenhower grin vanished instantly and his face became set in a rigid line, his jaw was thrust out, his eyes were hard, and nobody doubted he meant business.... He was by no means the easy going figure many of his critics had made him out to be."¹²⁹ These characteristics recommended him to powerful mentors, including MacArthur, Marshall, and even the legendary "Black" Jack Pershing, the American commander in France during World War I, whom Eisenhower assisted on a project in the late 1920s. None of them were to have as much impact on him as Pershing's protégé, Fox Conner.

Conner first met Eisenhower in 1919 at tank school at Fort Meade. Two years later, when then Chief of Staff Pershing made Conner a Brigadier General and sent him to Panama, he

took Eisenhower along as a senior aide. Over the next three years, Conner put Eisenhower through a course in the classics, literature, history, strategy, and leadership. Conner started Eisenhower on historical novels, then shared his remarkable, personal collection of military history from across the ages. Soon, Eisenhower had read all of the Civil War memoirs and knew the battles in detail. Conner would question him about the decisions that had been made, and challenged him to think through the whole strategy of a battle or a campaign. Conner had Eisenhower read Clausewitz three times, as well as study Napoleon's and Caesar's campaigns. Conner also shared his affection for Shakespeare, Plato, Tucidides, and Nietzsche.

This remarkable review of the Western Canon rivaled the classical education enjoyed by so many of America's Founders, and reflected in their personalities, character, and achievements. For Eisenhower, these were lessons in strategy and leadership, but also in patience and pragmatism, humility and professionalism, and most of all, the core elements of civility, both as a personal value and a martial art. Conner even suggested that before the next world war began – he had no doubt it would – Eisenhower should get close to another young officer Conner had identified as a future star, George C. Marshall.

After this ersatz graduate course, Eisenhower had a first class education to match his first class mind. His other great attribute was his personality. He could cajole people and draw the best out of them, while retaining the ability to command them for the tasks ahead. And he was a natural commander, expert at organization and structure, with the innate strategist's ability to match resources to needs and people and their abilities to the jobs where they would be most valuable. History then gave him the better part of two decades to hone these attributes before they were to be tested under fire. But when they were, they were not found wanting.

While his knowledge, personality, and connections got him his first command job in World War II, Eisenhower quickly showed himself able to succeed where everyone else had struggled, even when working in smaller scale. He built into his command and organizational plans, structural strengths that helped compensate for differences in culture and attitudes, weakness in units that were beyond his direct control, and the vagaries of powerful personalities. This can be seen in his wartime command structures, the reorganized Army after the war, the initial NATO structures, where he was the first SACEUR, and eventually in the White House national security structures. These were all devised for the most effective functioning of personalities, even the most difficult ones, who by nature and achievements in life, might have been the most difficult to accommodate in a collaborative role. These were civility in action – and they delivered on their promise.

When Eisenhower became president, he had multiple tasks: end the war in Korea, secure Europe, stabilize and strengthen the U.S. economy, and devise a grand strategy for the nation. To do this, he initiated Project Solarium to examine different policy options regarding the U.S. response to the Soviet expansion in the wake of World War II, and to bring strategic coherence and sustainability to the effort. The Truman Administration had put in place a number of outstanding programs and initiatives, but did a poor job tying them all together and integrating them into a functional Grand Strategy. Project Solarium was the answer to this

challenge, and in true Eisenhower, consensus-building fashion, the exercise not only included his own national security team, but also experts in the field from across and outside of government.

Project Solarium was structured around three competing teams, working in parallel. Each team comprised high-level experts collaborating to develop a specific, comprehensive strategy for defending the United States and meeting the Soviet challenge. Team A was assigned the containment policy, which sought to limit Soviet expansion and minimize the potential for armed conflict. Team B had a similar mandate, though they were encouraged to take a harder line towards the Soviets, relying less on allies and more on nuclear options. Team C examined the “roll-back” option. The name of the exercise came about because the initial organizational meetings were held in the White House Solarium, but as the project advanced, it took on the guise of “The First National War College Round Table Seminar,” chartered to consider “American Foreign Policy, 1953 – 1961.” Most of the work over the course of the three month initiative was done at Fort McNair, in what is now the National Defense University.

Each task force met separately and submitted individual reports on their findings to the National Security Council and the President. After three months, the teams met together with the President to discuss possible crosswalks in their results, but they were too dug in to see opportunities. Eisenhower did, and outlined for the group a hybrid of the two containment options that eventually became the “New Look” strategy. George Kennan, the A Team leader, former State Department Director of Policy Planning, and the creator of the strategy of “Containment,” later wrote in his diary that Eisenhower displayed “mastery of subject matter, truthfulness, and penetration.”¹³⁰

“New Look” became America’s new Grand Strategy. It was comprehensive, internally coherent and interactive, and explicitly sustainable. It was founded on an aggressive containment approach that took the entire world into consideration and integrated efforts, including significant new investments, in the complementary disciplines of diplomacy, defense, and intelligence. Many of those investments dovetailed neatly with the domestic elements of the approach, which were aimed at creating a stronger, sounder national economy that would be more sustainable and stable over the long haul. All of this required budget and management discipline and compelled new approaches to old problems. For this reason, the “New Look” depended heavily on international alliances, nuclear deterrence, and aggressive covert activity. While many details were changed by succeeding Presidents (not least the commitment to balanced budgets and sustainable economic strength) this was the strategy which – 35 years later, and 20 years after Eisenhower’s death – won the Cold War.

Among Eisenhower’s first steps in implementing his new Grand Strategy was to overhaul the National Security Council. The NSC was established by the National Security Act of 1947, largely as a device to moderate some of the conflicting bureaucratic interests that were created by the Act. It was ostensibly a tool to help the President manage foreign relations and national defense, but President Harry Truman viewed it as an imposition of Congressional authority on his prerogative and he rarely convened it until the initiation of the Korean War forced his hand.

When Eisenhower came to office, the NSC met weekly with the President. It served largely to keep lines of communication open between various members of the Cabinet and the national security team and the institutions they represented. Eisenhower appreciated the importance of harmony and regularity, particularly in quelling bureaucratic infighting, but he also saw the NSC as an underutilized resource. He created the position now known as National Security Advisor for business executive Robert Cutler, who had been on Secretary of War Henry Stimson's staff during World War II. Cutler reorganized the National Security Staff and its processes, creating the Planning Board to develop and vet policy options for dealing with national security issues proactively. Independent of the rest of the NSC staff, which was reactive and focused on policy execution, the Planning Board provided the NSC with a full range of policy alternatives, highlighting "departmental points of disagreement – so-called 'policy splits.'" This provided Eisenhower and his NSC with the means to deliberate, and make decisions objectively, independent of the back-room tradeoffs between rival bureaucracies that too often produced "a *fait accompli* to be accepted or rejected."¹³¹

A major "policy split" arose over how to handle the shambles in French Indochina. Despite the American tradition of anti-colonialism, the U.S. had been supporting France's defense of its Southeast Asian colonies since 1946. The policy was initiated to secure France's role at the center of a stable, peaceful, and prosperous post-war Western Europe. Its continuation was justified on containment grounds once Ho Chi Minh, the leader of the independence movement, secured Soviet backing and declared himself and his movement as Communist. By 1954, the U.S. was paying 75% of the cost of France's war in Viet Nam, but the French were still losing. That spring, when Viet Minh guerillas besieged a large contingent of Foreign Legion troops in an isolated northeastern valley called Dien Bien Phu, the French asked for U.S. air strikes and further direct engagement.

The French demands created a serious challenge for Eisenhower, who needed to manage the demands and expectations of an array of disparate and conflicting national and international interests. He did not want the Communists to win, but neither could he have the U.S. intervene unilaterally in defense of colonialism. In the aftermath of Korea, he also wanted to avoid another Asian land war. To justify his preference not to rescue the French, Eisenhower established several conditions to be met in order to justify U.S. intervention. While the conditions were specific to the situation, Eisenhower's use of objective criteria to de-politicize the question of intervention was not. It was another example of his use of civil discussion and debate as a potent political tool to protect his policy initiatives and Presidential prerogatives.

Eisenhower further established his "New Look" Grand Strategy with investments in the national security sector, diplomatic and intelligence initiatives, and the U.S. economy as a whole. He appointed a Presidential Science Advisor and established the Advanced Research Project Agency (now DARPA) in the Defense Department. He created the U.S. Information Agency to bolster official diplomatic efforts, and also increased funding through the Central Intelligence Agency for the nominally independent Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. He created the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and filled it with scientific and intellectual heavyweights including Bill Baker, the President of Bell Labs and Edwin Land, perhaps the world's foremost expert in the science of optics. Most famously, Eisenhower launched the

National Interstate and Defense Highway System – the Interstate – to modernize America’s transportation infrastructure and support economic growth and investment for generations to come.

In 1919, as young Army Tank Corps officer, Eisenhower was an observer on a cross-country expedition undertaken by the U.S. Army Motor Truck Corps from New York to San Francisco. American roads were so bad that the trip took two months to complete, at an average speed of less than 6 miles per hour. In response, Congress funded a system of paved, two-lane Federal Highways. With the Federal Highway Act of 1956, Eisenhower sought to replace that system with a network of multi-lane, limited-access, divided motorways patterned on the *autobahn*, which he had seen while leading the Allies to victory over Germany. The plan called for 41,000 miles of divided highways at a potential cost of \$101 billion. To maintain a balanced budget, Eisenhower proposed a self-financing option under which a national gasoline excise tax would cover the 90% of the project’s costs and the individual states would provide the remaining 10%. The President won the support of Democrats in Congress and Governors from both parties through an “approach [that] was non-partisan yet persistent...he had a clear idea of where he wanted to go and was flexible about how he got there, and he did not seek to capitalize, either personally or as the leader of his party, on this legislative success.”¹³²

This ability to work effectively with leaders in both parties was a consistent characteristic of the Eisenhower Presidency. From the most difficult and partisan of issues to the most banal, Eisenhower used shrewd instincts and well-honed people skills to win friends and allies, finesse situations, and achieve the results he wanted. In the midst of debate over whether to intervene in Vietnam, Eisenhower directed Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to organize meeting for senior Senators to discuss the pros and cons with top Administration officials and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Dulles said he would have the Chairman, Admiral Arthur Radford, represent the Chiefs. Eisenhower however, ordered that all of the chiefs be present at the meeting. At the meeting, Radford explained how the U.S. would be able to intervene quickly and successfully, with only a limited physical presence on the ground, to save the French at Dien Bien Phu. None of the Chiefs offered any comment, but when Senate Minority Leader Lyndon Johnson asked if all them agreed with Chairman Radford, Army Chief of Staff General Matthew Ridgway opined that success would likely take at least seven divisions of Regular Army troops and far more time than was being forecast. Congressional support for intervention never recovered.

The Vietnam debate was not the last time Lyndon Johnson helped Dwight Eisenhower achieve the results he wanted. For three-quarters of his Presidency, Republican President Eisenhower had to deal with Democratic majorities in both Houses of Congress. He was adept at working with Congressional leaders of both parties, and most of his major accomplishments were achieved with legislative backing from Democrats as well as Republicans, but Eisenhower seemed to have particular affinity for the Democratic leaders, Johnson and Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn. Though he had always thought of himself as being from Abilene, Kansas, Eisenhower was actually born in Dennison, Texas, not far from Rayburn’s hometown of Bonham, and he liked to joke about how important it was for three small town boys from Texas to stick together in the big city of Washington, DC. That kind of easy relationship, which

crossed geographical and cultural boundaries as well as partisan and political ones, gave Eisenhower the freedom and ability to do what he believed was right, even when it was not easy.

When Reconstruction ended in 1877, 13 years before Dwight Eisenhower was born, the pendulum swung from imperfect freedom for former slaves all the way to virtual re-enslavement across most of the “Old South,” and permanent status as second-class citizens throughout the nation. As Civil War historian James McPherson put it,

The pendulum did not swing back until another Republican President – who also happened to be a famous general – launched the ‘second Reconstruction’ three-quarters of a century later by sending units of the crack 101st Airborne Division into Little Rock to protect nine black students at Central High School.¹³³

On September 24, 1957, President Eisenhower ordered the U.S. Army’s 101st Airborne Division into Little Rock, Arkansas. This was the first use of federal military troops to enforce federal law in the American South since the end of Reconstruction, some 80 years earlier. Eisenhower also stripped Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus of his command of the Arkansas National Guard by “federalizing” the Guardsmen. This extraordinary action ended a three-week standoff in which Faubus and the Arkansas Guard blockaded Little Rock Central High School in an effort to keep it segregated by denying entry to nine black students. The students had been registered by the School Board in an attempt to comply with the 1954 U.S. Supreme Court ruling, *Brown v. Board of Education*, making all segregation of public schools unconstitutional, but Faubus pledged to defy the Board and the Court and employed the National Guard to do so.

The modern American civil rights movement is often marked as having started in December, 1955, when Mrs. Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give her bus seat to a white woman, but in many ways Little Rock had a bigger impact. For many Americans, watching the Little Rock events unfold on television was their first real exposure to the stark, violent conflict of civil rights and racial segregation. It was also the first time the federal government intervened directly to enforce federal court rulings, federal law, and the U.S. Constitution.

By intervening in support of the education of innocent youth, Eisenhower defused some of the controversy over federal action by making the battle as much about American civility as it was about race and rights. Further, while unprecedented, Eisenhower’s action was still a compromise, far less than many wanted. Nonetheless, it was the first time since the Civil War that the federal government directly defended the rights of American citizens from abuse at the hands of state and local government officials. It set an important precedent and moved the nation to higher ground. It was heroic leadership in the best American tradition.

The civility of America’s Founders, and its greatest political heroes, was Eisenhower’s *modus operandi*, both as General of the Army and President of the United States. He reached out to all sides with respect. He listened, in order to gain understanding, and in so doing he fostered trust. He firmly believed that “Trust is the coin of the realm,” a phrase often attributed to his speech writer and Congressional Liaison, Bryce Harlow. Eisenhower was always careful

to seek out support and to engage Congress to win their backing for his policy initiatives. For him, achievement was the arbiter of success, not credit. As a result, for a generation after he left the White House, his reputation as President lagged far behind his actual accomplishments. But those accomplishments stand as proof that even in the modern era, civility remains an awesome tool of political power.

¹²⁵ Fred I. Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference: Leadership Style from FDR to Clinton* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 49.

¹²⁶ Neil Sheehan, *A Bright Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 286.

¹²⁷ David M. Kennedy, “The Qualities of Leadership: Dwight D. Eisenhower as Warrior and President.” *Profiles in Leadership: Historians on the Elusive Quality of Greatness*. Ed. Walter Isaacson (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010), 211.

¹²⁸ Kennedy, 212.

¹²⁹ Michael Korda, *Ike: An American Hero* (New York: Harper, 2007), 157-158.

¹³⁰ Greenstein, 51.

¹³¹ John P. Burke, *Honest Broker? The National Security Advisor and Presidential Decision Making* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), 24.

¹³² Geoffrey Perret, “The 1956 Federal Highway Act.” *The Triumphs and Tragedies of the Modern Presidency: Seventy-Six Case Studies in Presidential Leadership*. Ed. David Abshire (Westport: Praeger Publishers), 81.

¹³³ James M. McPherson, *Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 152.

POSTSCRIPT

RONALD REAGAN IN GENEVA

“We must do better and we can.”

*– Ronald Reagan, at the Geneva Summit,
arguing that missile defense is preferable
to mutually assured destruction.*

*“Mr. President, I don’t agree with you, but I can see you really mean what you
say.”*

– Mikhail Gorbachev, in response.¹³⁴

When he was elected President, Ronald Reagan was known as a fierce Cold Warrior, a strong conservative, and an unapologetic partisan. Not a back alley fighter, perhaps, but certainly not a master of civility in political leadership, either. Nonetheless, no consideration of civility as a martial art would be complete without consideration of him and his accomplishments. In part, this is because on a personal level, the man himself embodied the principles of civility. More importantly, it is because his artful employment of the elements of civility in search of higher ground modeled the best of his predecessors and enabled him to close loops they had left open.

George Washington strove to model the values of the Founders and to establish a strong enough foundation that his new country could to survive long enough to realize all the elements of its idealistic vision, too many of which were honored at first, more in the saying than the doing. Henry Clay continued that quest, devoting his entire career to delaying the inevitable conflict until the principle of union, and the idealists who backed it, was strong enough to triumph over the evil of slavery. After winning the unavoidable war, Abraham Lincoln then offered the country, and the world, a new model for peace. It was a model tragically ignored after his murder, but never fully forgotten. More than fifty years later, Woodrow Wilson fought a war in order to apply the Lincoln model to the world at large, but he botched the execution. Franklin Roosevelt had to do it all again, a generation later, but he learned well from Wilson’s mistakes.

It fell to Dwight Eisenhower to return to Lincoln’s vision of peace at home. For the first time in nearly a century, he brought to bear the strength and will of the Federal government, and all the ideals of the nation, in service of making the American Dream more accessible to all Americans. Likewise, it fell to Ronald Reagan to close the loop on Lincoln’s dream – writ large and Wilsonian – by ending the Cold War with the kind of constructive, conciliatory peace that Lincoln sought between North and South.

As historians, we believe our successors will eventually attribute President Reagan's achievements to the quality of his character. His applications of the principles of civility were natural and easy for him, not because he was an actor by profession, but because at his core, he was a gentle and profoundly decent man. One of us, David Abshire, had the pleasure of knowing him slightly and the honor of working for him in two key positions, and even in times of great challenge and difficulty, he was hard not to like. He was not a genius, and certainly not an intellectual, but in Abshire's experience, he was a far more intelligent and thoughtful than he was often considered to be. And critically in a leadership role, he knew his mind.

Ronald Reagan knew what he believed, and why he believed it, and he had the courage of his convictions. This shone through. It bridged the gap of partisan conflict with the Democratic Speaker of the House, "Tip" O'Neill. He and the President would battle all week, but on Friday night, they'd get together, drink some whisky, and tell jokes to one another as old Irishmen. It bridged the gaps of culture, style, and intellect with British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who became his best friend among his fellow leaders and with whom he stayed very close. And ultimately, it bridged the vast gap of forty years of hostility, misunderstanding, proxy war, and myriad other differences with Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev. Together, they practiced the martial art of civility. Together, they reached higher ground and changed the world.

It would be hard to overstate how unlikely this looked when Reagan entered the White House. The Soviet Union was still led by a small group of old men who had been in power for a generation or more. Premier Leonid Brezhnev and most of his closest advisors were in their seventies, and many of them, like Brezhnev himself, were in ill health. Brezhnev's short-lived successor, KGB head Yuri Andropov, was the youngster, just into his mid-sixties, but he was no healthier than the rest. They had all come of age under Josef Stalin, their vision of reform and modernization was the failed efforts of Nikolai Khrushchev, and now, as they neared the ends of their lives, they felt they had the West on the run.

The United States, still recovering from the Vietnam War, was in the midst of the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression and had just been brought to heel in Iran by a group of student radicals. In Europe, the economy was little better and the NATO Alliance was equally troubled. Starting in the late 1970s, the Soviets deployed SS-20 intermediate range missiles in the Eastern European nations of the Warsaw Pact, missiles that could deliver nuclear warheads to every inch of Western Europe. Faced with this threat, many in the West – weary of never-ending conflict and the budgetary burden of inefficient militaries – seemed more interested in giving in than continuing to defend themselves. In 1983, when President Reagan sent Abshire to Brussels as U.S. Ambassador to NATO, his purpose was to shore up that fraying alliance so critical to American national defense strategy. Abshire's top priorities were 1) gain cooperation with Operation Staunch, the American effort to stop arms sales to Iran, 2) pursue reform of the bloated NATO military organizational and operational structures, and 3) win deployment of U.S. medium-range missiles to counter the SS-20 threat (and encourage the Soviets to return to a missile-free Europe). With U.S.-Soviet relations at low ebb, it was a very tall order indeed.

The initial indicators of change came from an unexpected quarter. In January, 1984, Senator Edward Kennedy, liberal Democrat from Massachusetts and perennial Reagan foe,

visited Moscow. He brought back a message from the Kremlin that the way to get back on a negotiating track was to start talking privately about a treaty to ban chemical weapons. The Senator was an “old-school” politician who considered super-power relations to be above politics, and his willingness to serve as an unofficial emissary was critical to establishing direct relations between the Soviet gerontocracy and the President who had made his name criticizing them and whose political enemies painted him as a zealot. “At a time when other Democrats were telling Ambassador Dobrynin that Reagan was dangerous, Senator Kennedy’s quiet coordination with the White House helped convince the Soviets that Reagan was ready for negotiation.” (Anatoly Dobrynin, a contemporary of those running the Kremlin, served as Soviet Ambassador to the U.S. for nearly a quarter century.)¹³⁵

A few weeks after Kennedy opened the dialogue, diplomat and Soviet expert Jack Matlock, Jr. (then the President’s senior advisor on Soviet Affairs and later Ambassador to Russia) went with Vice President George Bush to Andropov’s funeral. While there, he met secretly with Vadim Zagladin, the Deputy Chief of the Soviet Central Committee International Department and some of his colleagues. Matlock later wrote, “As I entered the forbidden gray building under KGB escort, I realized that I had been trying to get some contact with the Central Committee Staff ever since my first tour in Moscow in 1961. Now after 23 years of trying, I was entering the inner sanctum of the Communist system.”¹³⁶ Zagladin made it very clear that the Soviet leadership would need “elbow room” in order to move the relationship forward constructively. When the discussion hit a number of contentious issues, he suggested that they be continued in New York when economist Stanislav Menshikov, who was also present, was to be there in business in early March. Despite this promising start, progress slowed dramatically as it became clear that new Premier Konstantin Chernenko, who had been Brezhnev’s top deputy, did not have his predecessor’s enthusiasm for rapprochement with the U.S.

In an effort to move things forward, President Reagan invited long-serving Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko to visit the White House. Despite being surprised by the offer, Gromyko accepted and met with Reagan in September. The meeting was largely symbolic – an exercise in civility more than serious diplomacy – but all the more important in light of the colder tone from Moscow. Gromyko was considered the leader of the “hard-line” anti-American contingent in the Kremlin, so the fact that he and Reagan were able to recognize and acknowledge to one another their common interests in ending the arms race, and that they could engage in a respectful and even cordial conversation and exchange of views, was meaningful. In his memoir of the events, Matlock explained that First Lady Nancy Reagan also played a surprisingly simple yet psychologically valuable role. While chatting with guests just before the luncheon, Gromyko approached the First Lady with a request, “Gromyko appealed to her to whisper “peace” in her husband’s ear every night. She said she would and added “I’ll tell you the same.” Then standing on tiptoes, she whispered in his ear, “Peace, peace.” Gromyko’s initial expression of surprise quickly changed to a most uncharacteristic broad smile. Afterwards, he frequently recounted the incident.”¹³⁷

This policy of outreach and engagement from Ronald Reagan stood in contrast to his rhetoric only 18 months earlier, when he coined the phrase “evil empire” to describe the Soviet Union. But Reagan himself did not see it that way. “I’ve always believed...that it’s important to

define differences, because there are choices and decisions to be made in life and history.”¹³⁸ Having defined the differences, Reagan was now working to bridge them. His behavior during this time of engagement was a fine example of the use of civility as a martial art: He showed respect to the Soviets by listening to them, and as he did so, both sides gained better understanding of one another, fostering the trust necessary for two sides with differing interests to work together constructively where their interests coincide. These were skills Reagan had honed as President of the Screen Actors’ Guild. In 1960, he engaged in prolonged negotiations with the Hollywood studios on the matter of residual payments to actors for the broadcast of their films on television. He recognized that behind their firm stance, the studios were actually in a weak position. Having won the trust of his members, he called the studios’ bluff and led the union out on strike. After five weeks, the circumstances had changed considerably and Reagan won a compromise deal that broke new ground for actors.

25 years later, the “right circumstances” were created when Mikhail Gorbachev became the Soviet Union’s new leader. Gorbachev had been introduced to the West a few months earlier, when British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher told the BBC, “I like Mr. Gorbachev. We can do business together.”¹³⁹ As he wrote in his memoir, “When I became head of state, it was already obvious that there was something wrong in this country.... Doomed to serve ideology and bear the heavy burden of the arms race, it was strained to the utmost.”¹⁴⁰ He also later observed that, “The Soviet concepts of those days rested on a dogmatic world outlook not on reality, not on a sober analysis of the situation, nor on meeting the real and vital interests of our country and our people. Rather our foreign policy was orientated with harsh competition with the outside world.”¹⁴¹ It was in the need to end that “harsh competition” that Gorbachev and Reagan could find common interests and work together to achieve higher ground. Reagan knew that the need for trust would be essential, but both he and Gorbachev faced challenges developing support within their own camps.

As Reagan later wrote in his own memoir, “Cap [Secretary of Defense Weinberger] was not as interested as George [Secretary of State Shultz] in opening negotiations with the Russians, and some of his advisors at the Pentagon strongly opposed some of my ideas on arms control that George supported.... Cap had allies among some of my more conservative political supporters, who let me know they thought Shultz had gone soft on the Russians and they wanted me to fire him – an idea, I told them, that was utter nonsense.”¹⁴² Instead, Reagan sent Shultz to meet new Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze at an event to mark the tenth anniversary of the Helsinki Accords. The Accords themselves had been a highly controversial bargain in which the U.S. accepted the Cold War boundaries of Eastern Europe in exchange for a number of public diplomacy initiatives including more student exchanges, greater commercial activity, and a significant increase in unblocked international broadcasting. In retrospect, it was the ideal time and place to launch the diplomatic initiative that would eventually end the Cold War and accomplish by peaceful means, the “roll-back” of the borders that the U.S. had pledged at Helsinki not to attempt by military force.

Having established a sound working relationship with his Soviet counterpart, Secretary Schultz pitched the idea of a summit meeting in Geneva, Switzerland in November, 1985. In order to prepare the President to meet Gorbachev, Schultz had Matlock put together a series of

briefing papers and other learning materials both from inside and outside the government, what the White House staff began to call *Soviet Union 101*. By nature, interagency briefing papers are dull and difficult reading – not the kind of material Reagan preferred – so Matlock drew in more lively experts, including Morton Abramowitz, Director of Research at the State Department, Robert Gates, Deputy Director of CIA, and Suzanne Massie, author of *Land of the Firebird: The Beauty of Old Russia*, a book Reagan particularly enjoyed. There were also films on Gorbachev and role-playing with Matlock playing Gorbachev.

Prior to the Summit, Reagan dictated a memorandum to explain his views. He recognized the game that Gorbachev had to play with his own power brokers in Moscow. Reagan also understood that it was just as important he not seem overly concerned with America's strategic interests as it was that he not come across as weak. Reagan did not think in neat analytical categories, but in an almost impressionistic way, and he knew that the most valuable outcome from this first summit would be personal relationship between the leaders that would allow for more meetings in the future. He had an innate ability to concentrate on the biggest issues and think through how to negotiate them most effectively, given individual personalities and needs, while simultaneously taking account of probable public reaction.

The Summit agenda called for a first meeting of only fifteen minutes. It actually went on for more than an hour. When it was Reagan's turn following Gorbachev's, the American President focused on the causes of distrust. He noted that there had been a number of meetings in the past that showed that was easy to do, but the United States certainly had no hostile designs, as it had been made out to have. Later in the day, Reagan invited Gorbachev to come to the United States. Gorbachev accepted but wanted Reagan to reciprocate by joining him in Moscow. During the next private session, Reagan moved in on the issues of human rights and the Helsinki Accords. This line of discussion was resisted by Gorbachev, who believed such issues were brought up merely for political purposes. When Gorbachev began to complain about the American Congress, implying that perhaps the President could take some action, Reagan replied, "You sure are wrong about an American President's power."¹⁴³

To break the tension, Reagan suggested a walk between the two outside down by the lake, accompanied only by interpreters and bodyguards. There, Reagan invited Gorbachev into the boathouse and the leaders sat down next to the fireplace. The President pulled out a paper of proposals for nuclear arms negotiations. After a careful reading, Gorbachev said he could accept the proposal of 50% reduction in nuclear weapons, but wanted additional provisions to prevent an arms race in space. He also raised the issue of whether Reagan would limit research on the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), a space-based anti-missile system that many Soviet military leaders believed would allow the United States to launch a nuclear attack without fear of reprisal. Reagan said he would not stop research, but that the Soviets had nothing to fear because no country would have a monopoly on this technology. The U.S. would share it. This was not the answer Gorbachev had expected and he remained deeply suspicious. Nevertheless, Reagan held firm in his commitment to civility over hostility, telling Pat Buchanan, White House Director of Communications, "This has been a good meeting. I think I can work with this guy. I can't just keep on poking him in the eye."¹⁴⁴

The day after the Geneva Summit, Reagan came to Brussels for the North Atlantic Council meeting between NATO heads of state. The President was on his game, briefing his counterparts on his meeting with Gorbachev and his offer to share SDI research. He explained that since SDI was purely defensive in nature, and since the West had no intentions of starting a war, there was no reason not to make it available to everyone. This briefing had many of Reagan's aides, notably Secretary of State George Shultz, on the edge of his chair, fearful of the President making a mistake. In the end though, Reagan was so good that his frequent critic, French President Francois Mitterrand, told Abshire as they walked out of the room, "Votre Président est très magnifique!"

Gorbachev and Reagan both agreed that without trust, even the slightest improvement in world affairs would be hard to achieve. Trust was the fundamental issue although both sides had challenges to overcome in order to increase it. 1986, however, was a year of some setbacks in this regard. In preparation for Gorbachev's planned visit to the United States, the Soviets proposed an interim meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, halfway between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Reagan accepted, and they met in October. Both men brought sweeping proposals to cut nuclear weapons stockpiles, and even discussed eliminating them altogether within ten years, but they could not reach agreement. Gorbachev was adamant that the U.S. stop work on SDI, while Reagan was equally firm that without SDI, elimination would not be possible. Reagan later wrote of Reykjavik, "...my hopes for a nuclear-free world soared briefly, then fell during one of the longest, most disappointing – and ultimately angriest – days of my presidency."¹⁴⁵ The meeting broke up without success, with a note of bitterness, and with recriminations.

Within just a few weeks, things got much worse for Reagan. A Beirut newspaper ran a story documenting secret U.S. arms sales to Iran in exchange for the release of American hostage being held by Shi'ite militia groups in Lebanon. This was a disaster on two fronts. First, it meant the U.S. was violating its own arms embargo against Iran, contrary to U.S. law, American policy, and the diplomatic efforts Abshire and other Ambassadors had been making to win support of the embargo from our allies. Second, it defied common sense. It is always a bad idea to pay ransom – which this appeared to be – or to otherwise reward terrorists or criminals for their actions. Then in December, things got worse, when Attorney General Edwin Meese discovered that Marine Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North of the President's National Security Staff had taken the money Iran had paid for the weapons and used it to support the anti-Communist *contra* guerillas in Nicaragua. As a matter of law, the money belonged to the U.S. Treasury, and under the Constitution, such funds can only be spent with the authorization of Congress. If the President had known of this misuse, it would have been an impeachable offense.

Things unraveled quickly. The President's approval ratings and public support collapsed. Congress started official inquiries and there were many calls for a special prosecutor and independent investigations of all of the events. At the White House, under the leadership of Chief of Staff Donald Regan, a bunker mentality took hold. On December 12, Communications Director Pat Buchanan sent the President a lengthy memo suggesting that he appoint a "Special Counselor" for 90 days, give him Cabinet Rank, full responsibility for managing everything related to the events with Iran, the hostages, and the *contras*, and authority in the White House

independent and equal to that of the Chief of Staff. At the President's request, Abshire came back from NATO and took up this post.

When he first sat down with President Reagan, Abshire explained the scope of the problem: Not only did polls show that a majority of Americans believed that the U.S. had traded arms for hostages, and that doing so had been wrong, they showed that a remarkable 60 to 65% of the American public believed that the White House was leading a cover-up in the Iran-contra affair. This was by far, the worst threat to the Presidency itself since the Watergate cover-up under Richard Nixon. Abshire pleaded with the President to recognize the severity of the perception problem. In his gentle but firm way, Reagan responded: "The Press has been exaggerating these problems. Certainly there've been many mistakes in carrying out our policy. But the original goals in dealing with Iran were justified. We're trying to make a breakthrough. I don't believe that we were trading arms for hostages. We're dealing with one group in Iran. They were dealing with another group in Beirut. It was not government to government."

Abshire tried to respond respectfully, "But, Mr. President, the American public doesn't see it that way. This wasn't your intention, but it's the way it ended up. If we could clear the air on this issue and say that, while it wasn't your intention, it ended up trading arms for hostages, we wouldn't have such a credibility problem. We could put this thing behind us." Reagan leaned forward in his chair and asserted with passion, "Dave, I don't care if I'm the only person in America that does not believe it – I don't believe it was arms for hostages."

If this exchange showed Reagan's naïveté, it also confirmed his basic honesty. Even when it was clearly to his disadvantage to do so, he stuck to what he believed was the truth rather than say what others told him he should say. Ironically, it was this stubborn refusal to compromise his own sense of honor and honesty that convinced the public that he really was lying. Worse, they supposed that if he would lie about arms-for-hostages, which was merely wrong, he would certainly lie about the *contra* funds diversion, which was unconstitutional and could end his Presidency. But Ronald Reagan believed that trading arms for hostages was actually immoral, and he could not admit, even to himself, that he had done something so morally repugnant. For him, it was not a matter of public relations or legal defense. He simply could not believe that he, Ronald Reagan, had violated his own personal honor. Nixon, John F. Kennedy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, most other prior Presidents were shrewd and practical enough to act expediently in a similar situation. Not Reagan.

Eventually, the Reagan Presidency weathered the storm. Reagan made a number of decisions that showed the strength of his character. He agreed to full cooperation with an independent Board of Inquiry – the Tower Board chaired by former Senator John Tower and including former Secretary of State and Senator Edmund Muskie and former National Security Advisor and retired Air Force Lieutenant General Brent Scowcroft. He waived all claims to Executive Privilege, turned over all the relevant White House records and documents, including his own diaries, and ordered his staff to cooperate fully with all the investigations. He even testified before Congress in the matter himself – something Presidents almost never do. Reagan felt he had nothing to hide and wanted everyone to know it. Trust was of critical importance to

him and he wanted to do everything he possibly could to restore the trust of the public in him, his administration, and the Office of the Presidency.

Later in 1987, these efforts paid dividends on the world stage. In December, Reagan and Gorbachev signed the INF Treaty, eliminating all intermediate range nuclear forces world-wide. This even went beyond the “zero-zero option” we had sought previously to protect NATO from the threat of Soviet SS-20s and represented the first time in the history of armed conflict that adversaries have agreed to the total abolition of an entire class of weapon. Reagan’s long commitment to civility and trust-building finally paid off. The strong personal rapport he had built with Gorbachev allowed the Soviet leader to overcome his own doubts and quell the fears of his military. Many believe it also strengthened Gorbachev in his efforts to implement the reforms that led rather directly to the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War itself.

All of these accomplishments were consistent with Reagan’s commitment to civility as the first and most effective way of dealing with political challenge – listen, acknowledge, engage, foster trust, find common ground, achieve better outcomes. Like the other American leaders we have considered here, Reagan was always happy to put his ego aside for the greater good, always keeping his eye on the ultimate goal. In the case of the dance he began in Geneva, Ronald Reagan was profoundly well-positioned to exercise the essential elements of civility that empower statesmen to act shrewdly and effectively, convincing others that the achievement of higher ground is in their own best interest, when it is actually in everyone’s.

¹³⁴ George P. Shultz, Foreword to *Reagan in His Own Hand*, Kiron K. Skinner, et al, eds. (New York: The Free Press, 2001), xi.

¹³⁵ Jack F. Matlock, Jr., *Reagan and Gorbachev: How the Cold War Ended* (New York: Random House, 2004), 93-94.

¹³⁶ Matlock, Jr., 93.

¹³⁷ Matlock, Jr., 101.

¹³⁸ www.reaganfoundation.org. Comment referring to Remarks at the Annual Convention of the National Association of Evangelicals in Orlando, Florida, March 8, 1983. Retrieved August 10, 2013.

¹³⁹ <http://www.margaretthatcher.org>. Comment made in a BBC interview with John Cole, December 17, 1984. Retrieved August 10, 2013.

¹⁴⁰ Mikhail Gorbachev, *Memoires* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), xxvii.

¹⁴¹ Matlock, Jr., 104.

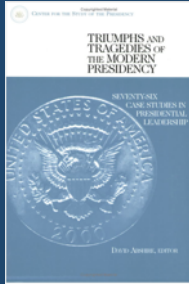
¹⁴² Ronald Reagan, *An American Life: Ronald Reagan* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 511.

¹⁴³ Matlock, Jr., 161.

¹⁴⁴ Matlock, Jr., 164.

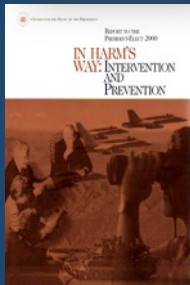
¹⁴⁵ Ronald Reagan, *An American Life: Ronald Reagan* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 675.

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