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THE World Crisis

THE WAY FORWARD AFTER IRAQ

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THE WAY FORWARD AFTER IRAQ

**With a Foreword by
Geoffrey Howe**

**Edited and Introduced by
Robert Harvey**



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Robert Harvey, 2008

FOREWORD: TOWARDS A SAFER WORLD

Geoffrey Howe

This book brings together perhaps the most senior grouping of American and British statesmen ever assembled under one roof, expressing for the first time their candid and strongly felt opinions about the disturbing trend of world events. I asked them to contribute, and am enormously grateful for their response.

These are historic American names – Carter, Shultz, Kissinger, Brzezinski, Carlucci, Scowcroft, Nunn and Lugar, along with many others from both parties – and the verdict is clear: we got it wrong over the past eight years, let's get it right in time for a presidency that returns America to its traditional values of peace reaching out to all nations and using force as a very last resort. The British contributions point in exactly the same direction.

The book is in large part a repudiation of the international policies of the past eight years which, however well intentioned, were the most aberrant and naive in recent American and British history, legitimizing unprovoked wars that caused the unnecessary deaths of tens of thousands of civilians and thousands of brave servicemen and women, departing from

previous constraints, eschewing diplomacy for force with disastrous short- and long-term results. Thankfully these years are almost past us; they risked turning the West into the villains of international politics.

The views expressed here are all the more effective for being written in statesmanlike, gentle, restrained, carefully argued and measured terms. Above all they are constructive, a manifesto of recommendations. For they are not being voiced by the usual anti-American left, or even liberals: they are written by former senior public servants, Republican, Democrat and some of their British counterparts, many of them directly involved with bringing to an end the Cold War.

Indeed, for many years now I have been increasingly dismayed by the turn that international relations are taking. Instead of building upon the huge achievement of the end of the Cold War, too many in the West have become obsessed with far lesser threats (mostly Middle East-based and exemplified by the horrific tragedy of 9/11), exaggerating them out of all proportion and thereby magnifying dangers which had previously been more or less containable, specifically in Iraq and Afghanistan. As two former Presidential National Security Advisors, Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski, remind us here, those were the days in which at the press of a button tens of millions could have been annihilated by nuclear war. While today's security threats remain extremely serious, and certainly must be addressed, they cannot credibly match that order of magnitude. Today's so-called 'war on terror' so far bears little comparison with either of the two world wars or with the Cold War itself. As the United Kingdom's Foreign Secretary alongside Margaret Thatcher, when we welcomed Mikhail Gorbachev on his first crucial visit to the West, I can testify that the atmosphere then was dramatically darker than ever it is today.

Working together with a former US Ambassador to the OECD Edward Streator, and two British colleagues, Richard

Ryder and Robert Harvey, I invited senior policymakers from both sides of the Atlantic to contribute their thoughts to a short book, with practical recommendations on how to break out of this slough of despair and grasp the great opportunities presented by the twenty-first century – probably the most exciting yet in the history of mankind. The eagerness of their response and the passion of their views reflects the critical juncture we are at in history.

All of these ‘Twenty Wise Men’ have immense experience. They include a former Democratic US President; two former Republican Secretaries of State; two former British Deputy Prime Ministers (one of them – myself – a former Foreign Secretary, the other a former Defence Secretary); a former British Energy Secretary; four former National Security Advisors to the President (one Democrat, three Republican); a Republican former US Secretary of Defense; a former Republican Chairman of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee; a former Democrat Chairman of the US Senate Armed Services Committee; a former Assistant US Defense Secretary; a former US Ambassador to China and Saudi Arabia; a former head of the British Foreign Office; a former head of the US National Grid and current Chairman of the UN’s Clean Energy Committee; a former deputy head of MI6; the United Kingdom’s most distinguished academic defence expert; a former member of the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee; and two eminent British journalists.

Even more important than their combined experience has been their ability, as figures above the fray, to speak freely, freed from the constraints of office or fear of prejudicing their careers. These are entirely dispassionate opinions from some of the most eminent names in the fields of foreign affairs and defence to have been brought together in recent years. The idea was to provide a contribution to the debate well in time for consideration by the upcoming US administrations – whichever party takes office in 2009. We do not share the

view that the next US government will simply continue the policies of the current one. On the contrary, the policies of one administration have frequently been reversed by the next. The US is a vibrant society, and capable of learning from its mistakes.

Sadly, contributions from other countries could not be brought into the dialogue for it would then have been spread too thinly. Links between the United Kingdom and the United States are sufficiently significant in themselves – not least in their role in bringing the US and Europe closer together – that we felt our recommendations at this stage would have a more useful impact if they were limited to the two nations. Hopefully it will be possible to continue and expand the dialogue later on.

The truly remarkable thing about these essays – from Americans who served at the very highest level, both Republicans and Democrats, as well as their British counterparts – is the breadth of their consensus on what needs to be done. These are not sterile analyses of the mistakes of the past, but forward-looking, practical recommendations, a real blueprint for action which tackles immediate challenges with resolve and looks forward with optimism to a future of unprecedented opportunity and self-fulfilment for not just a few, mainly in the developed nations, but the great majority of peoples around the world. While the view of each contributor is entirely his own and represents no endorsement of any other, I would suggest there is remarkable agreement among most (not all) on the following points:

1. The coalition invasion of Iraq, however well-intentioned its promoters might proclaim it, has been beyond doubt a disaster (see the essays by Carter, Howe, Heseltine, Brzezinski, Freeman, Howard, Jenkins and Harvey), and there are increasing doubts about whether the intervention in Afghanistan, while originally justified by the 9/11 attacks, makes sense (Heseltine, Jenkins, Harvey).

2. The US should commit itself to a much more multilateral approach, exerting diplomatic and economic pressure and resorting to force, if at all, only as a very last resort (Carter, Kissinger, Howe, Heseltine, Brzezinski, Scowcroft, Carlucci, Howard, Harvey).
3. Terrorism, while a very serious challenge, is not remotely comparable to the wars between major states of the last century, which ultimately threatened nuclear annihilation (Kissinger, Brzezinski, Scowcroft, Howard). The threat does not justify an official culture of scare-mongering, much less the erosion of the civil liberties that are the foundations of western societies and which have survived much more dangerous challenges (Carter, Jenkins, Harvey).
4. Today's biggest security threat probably stems from the threat of nuclear proliferation, nuclear stockpiles (still on alert) and the related possibility that terrorist groups might acquire a nuclear weapon or 'dirty bomb'. No country can completely insulate itself against this hazard, but the prospect can – and must – be substantially reduced by a much more consistently rigorous non-proliferation regime (Carter, Kissinger, Shultz, Rowen, Brzezinski, Scowcroft, Nunn).
5. There is a major need for the United States and Russia to slash their still large stockpiles of nuclear weapons, even perhaps with a view to their eventual elimination, as a trade-off for global acceptance of a non-proliferation regime (Carter, Shultz, Rowen, Nunn).
6. The issue of reform of successful Cold War institutions in need of improvement such as the UN and NATO needs to be addressed urgently to reflect the reality of a very different world, in which the generation of economic growth may be decisively tilted towards Asia and the new 'great powers'. A more consensual and effective international security structure needs to be put in place (Shultz, Brzezinski, Scowcroft, Howell, Howard, Harvey).

7. The United States and its allies must continue to pursue the goal of averting humanitarian catastrophes, and promoting freedom and democracy. But except in extraordinary circumstances this needs to be done through economic and diplomatic leverage, and very rarely by force. Different societies at different stages of development cannot be turned into democracies overnight without risking immense suffering of the kind experienced in Iraq. This is not cynical 'realpolitik'; it is humanity and commonsense (Carter, Howe, Kissinger, Howard, Allen).
8. The United States and the European Union should reconcile themselves to the emergence of major new powers around the world – China, India, Japan, Brazil and Mexico, and one day South Africa and Nigeria. The US remains overwhelmingly the strongest military power, but cannot compel others to do its bidding. However, it can persuade and lead through force of example (Kissinger, Carlucci, Howe, Heseltine, Brzezinski, Scowcroft, Freeman, Howard, Harvey).
9. Good US–EU relations ('a grand consensus', in Brzezinski's words) are absolutely key to global security and prosperity (Kissinger, Shultz, Rowen, Howe, Heseltine, Brzezinski, Scowcroft, Harvey). The US is right to press for a greater European commitment to security, and a more united and coherent foreign policy voice and role for the European Union, which shares a common heritage and democratic value. But not every British contributor shares this view. However, there is a British consensus that the Commonwealth has a major role to play (Howe, Howell).
10. The US and Europe must at last recognize the need for far stronger and indefinitely sustained efforts to find a satisfactory settlement of the Israel–Palestinian conflict (Carter, Howe, Brzezinski), if necessary with US and European forces as its guarantor.

11. Russia needs to be 'neither isolated nor propitiated', as Brzezinski says, but drawn ever more closely into the western economic and political community (Kissinger, Shultz, Rowan, Brzezinski, Scowcroft, Nunn).
12. A world in which there is an ever-greater demand for energy, particularly among newly emerging powers, must address the issue of security of energy supplies and fair pricing as a priority (Lugar, Terzic, Howell).
13. Global warming should be treated as a pressing global concern. Measures should be undertaken on an effective worldwide basis (not limited to a few selective western countries), while showing awareness of the need to improve living standards in developing countries. Solutions should encourage global economic growth and should be carefully considered in the light of clear scientific evidence (Shultz, Rowen, Terzic, Scott Plummer), also being targeted at the consequences of global warming (Howell).
14. The global economy has already provided huge increases in living standards across the world, and has the potential to provide much more. The danger that large parts of these are being left behind and that inequalities between, and within, nations which could create a backlash are rapidly increasing. This needs to be addressed both at national and international level (Kissinger, Shultz, Rowen, Brzezinski, Scowcroft).
15. Modern means of communication, in particular the internet, mobile telephones and television, provide a new 'political globalization' in which educated or like-minded people across the globe can make common cause in communicating their views across thousands of miles. The global environmental movement, anti-globalization movements and, in extreme form, Islamic terrorism, are manifestations. Global political organizations may not be far over the horizon (Brzezinski, Howell).
16. The United Kingdom needs to return to long-established traditions of cabinet and parliamentary government, and