Chapter 5: "Government for the People"

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Praise for *The Middle Class Fights Back*

This powerful book is a crucial voice in the historic fightback movement against injustice in America. Don't miss it!

–Cornel West,
Professor, Princeton University

D'Agostino exposes the truth behind the corporate-driven education reform movement and offers the kind of research and experience-based conversation about how to improve public schools that our policy-makers should be having. He reminds us that – rather than rely on these policy-makers – parents, young people and educators must fight, in a progressive and disciplined manner, for the policy and institutional reforms our country needs and our children deserve.

–Julie Cavanagh,
The Grassroots Education Movement,
Producer of *The Inconvenient Truth Behind Waiting for Superman*

The Middle Class Fights Back *cogently argues that it was unions and government that created the middle class as we once knew it, and that the shrinking of unions beginning in the 1970s has had a devastating effect on the prosperity of ordinary people. Arguing that militarism and capital flight are undermining the country's capacity to produce wealth, D'Agostino's provocative book makes the case for massive public investment in green technology and for the creation of a new economy of worker-owned and controlled enterprises.*

–Moshe Adler,
Author of *Economics for the Rest of Us: Debunking the Science that Makes Life Dismal* (The New Press, 2010)

It is conventional wisdom that downsizing most of America's military capabilities would destabilize international security and a democratic world order. D'Agostino's methodical analysis shatters that picture, exposing how it upholds the power of state and corporate elites at the expense of the populace, at home and abroad. He shows how demilitarization can be achieved without jeopardizing real security, freeing up resources needed for a Green New Deal, which can provide productive livelihoods for ordinary people and a viable ecology for future generations. This is what is meant by "human security," which D'Agostino argues is the proper aim of government. His book is a tour de force!

–Saul H. Mendlovitz,
Dag Hammarskjöld Professor, Rutgers Law School-Newark

CHAPTER 5

Government for the People

INTRODUCTION

According to planetary science, physical conditions necessary for life—which may be a rarity in our universe—are likely to exist on earth for another billion years, after which increased radiation from the sun will wipe out our biosphere (Caldeira and Kasting 1992). From a human perspective, a billion years is an eternity. But environmental crises created by humans, if not reversed in the current decade, will likely destroy billions of human lives through starvation, dehydration, disease, and political violence within the life span of babies being born today or, at the latest, of their children.[1]

As adults, this generation—or, rather, the part of it that survives this hell of ecological collapse—will live on a barren planet stripped of hundreds of thousands of species that took the last half a billion years to evolve. Nature will not make an exception for America, as the extreme weather events currently decimating agriculture worldwide attest. Entire regions that are growing grains today will be unsuitable for farming, and the remaining humans will live in a continual state of war over the arable land and potable water that remain (Brown 2009; Klare 2002; Wright 2004). Those miserable people—our children and grandchildren—will be struggling for physical survival, not worrying about repaying government debt.

1. Such are the consequences of large scale destruction of agriculture that will be caused by catastrophic climate change, which is imminent and can only be averted, if at all, by emergency action (Brown 2009; Harvey 2011; Klare 2002; Richardson et al. 2009; Wright 2004).

This or some similar nightmare is humanity's certain fate in the twenty-first century unless citizens in the coming years act to reverse the polluting and other human activities that are destroying local ecosystems and the carbon fuel use that is driving global warming. The fate of our planet is quickly spinning out of human control, and the need for action is urgent (Brown 2009; Nordhaus 2012; Wright 2005). Against this sobering backdrop, no question is more important that this: what is the proper role of government in averting global ecological catastrophe? Related to this is another question: if governments fail to act, will market rationality save the day?

According to conventional wisdom, these are difficult and complex questions that are fraught with disagreement among the experts. They are not. Although experts can and do differ over strategies and technical matters, there is widespread agreement on fundamentals. For example, some economists support a carbon tax and others a cap-and-trade system, but there is virtually no disagreement among scientists that CO_2 emissions must be greatly reduced in the near future to avert catastrophic global warming (Brown 2009; Nordhaus 2012). Nor is there disagreement among economists that some kind of government action is required (Nordhaus 2012).[2] The problem is that many of these same experts leave their scientific training at the door and abuse their academic authority when they go to work as propagandists for oil companies and other big corporations or as public intellectuals promoting laissez-faire ideology. In any case, America cannot afford to postpone debate and action on viable solutions to known crises that threaten civilization itself (Nordhaus 2012).

All economists, even neoliberals, know that markets are not rational under certain conditions. One such condition is when the parties to a market transaction do not bear its full costs, which economists call the problem of "externalities." Every time a motorist fills up at the pump, for example, an externality occurs. Exxon-Mobil and its shareholders make money, and the motorist gets the fuel needed to drive to work. But neither party pays the most important cost of the transaction—the contribution to global warming that occurs when the product is used.

This cost can be quantified. It is the amount of tax that would have to be imposed on such transactions in order to reduce overall carbon fuel consumption enough—and soon enough—to reverse global warming.

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2. All economists recognize the existence of "market failure" under some circumstances and the corrective role of government in many such cases (Stiglitz and Walsh 2007). Unabated global warming is an extreme case of market failure and a classic example of the "free-rider" problem for which government and multilateral treaties can provide a solution (Klein 2001; Olson 1971).

The calculations are complex and require technical assumptions, but the underlying principle is simple and uncontroversial. An excessive[3] amount of gasoline will be produced and consumed in an unregulated market system because those buying and selling the product are not paying the costs of global warming, which are externalized and imposed on others in the future. The free market does not produce rational outcomes in this case or any other where significant externalities occur. But government can make the market rational by instituting carbon taxes or some equally effective policy for reducing emissions.[4] Government can impose the future costs of global warming on those who buy and sell gasoline today, and then they will buy and sell less of it. The free market cannot save us from global warming, but government can.

To be sure, global warming by its nature is a problem that cannot be solved by the United States alone. Tropical rain forests, for example, remove large quantities of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and should be part of the solution to global warming. Yet these forests are being destroyed for their lumber because the free market does not value their ecological benefits, another kind of externality. In fact, in cutting down these forests, loggers are destroying not only trees but also entire ecosystems containing hundreds of thousands of irreplaceable species, including many plants with unique medicinal properties. The need to protect tropical rain forests is irrefutable, but capitalism, left to itself, is destroying them. Justice, respect for nature, and concern for future generations demand that some of the revenue collected from carbon taxes in advanced industrial economies be used to subsidize maintenance of these forests, thus compensating poor countries for the foreign exchange revenue they would otherwise have received for their lumber.

As the most powerful country in the world as well as the largest emitter of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in history, the United

3. By excessive, I mean relative to the efficient amount that would be produced and consumed in a perfect market. All economists today recognize the need to modify the perfect market model under certain conditions, such as externalities, oligopoly, and information asymmetries (Stiglitz and Walsh 2007).

4. For example, higher gasoline taxes would give motorists incentives to greatly reduce their use of gasoline through conservation, hybrid vehicles, or public transportation. To compensate motorists for the costs of changing their energy consumption patterns (without undoing the incentive), a payroll tax reduction of the same amount can be given to all working people, funded by this gasoline tax and other carbon taxes. The higher gasoline taxes and reduced payroll taxes can be phased in by perhaps one dollar per gallon every year for 10 years. A carbon tax on coal can create an incentive for utilities to produce electricity from renewable sources, providing green energy for hybrid cars. Finally, expanded public transportation built as part of the green New Deal can enable a large reduction in automobile use overall.

States has a special responsibility to lead the world in stopping global warming.[5] That can never occur, however, as long as the American political system is dominated by huge corporations like Exxon-Mobil, Chevron, and coal giant Peabody Energy Corporation (Gelbspan 2004). Nor is the problem limited to individual politicians and corporations. It arises out of the rules of American state capitalism that permit corporate elites to move in and out of top government positions and to dominate politicians through lobbyists, campaign contributions, and super PACs. While some exceptional politicians and corporations do act in socially responsible ways in spite of all this, the system itself rewards self-destructive greed and narrow, short-term interests.

Anyone who wants their children to have a humane future needs a crystal-clear understanding of what is really going on here. The root of the problem is *not* that government is dysfunctional by nature and politicians inherently corrupt and self-serving. Rather, the problem is a state capitalist system that systematically undermines the integrity of even the most dedicated public servant. The American people need government to solve problems that will otherwise destroy us, but it has to be a government for the people, not a state capitalist government for corporations and the rich. Only a revolutionary mass movement can create a government for the people, and such a movement is now an urgent necessity for the future of civilization.

For the reasons indicated, carbon taxes (or an equivalent CO_2 emissions reduction system), a strong and well-funded Environmental Protection Agency, and other policies that can protect the earth's ecology are essential goals of any public interest movement worthy of the name. Government regulations to correct other externalities, such as those involving the health and safety of workplaces, are also justified and necessary to impose rationality on markets. This is also the case with food safety standards and other consumer protections that prevent participants in market transactions from imposing costs on third parties, such as private and government health insurance providers.

PLANNING FOR HUMAN SECURITY

The implications of global environmental crises for humanity's future remind me of a comment by Albert Einstein. While uttered over 60 years

5. For a critical review of U.S. policy on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, see Deller et al. (2003).

ago about another unprecedented threat, his words could hardly be more relevant to the problem of climate change today. "The unleashed power of the atom," Einstein said, "has changed everything save our modes of thinking and we thus drift towards unparalleled catastrophe." The "modes of thinking" that made nuclear weapons seem inevitable were rooted in a system of security based on heavily armed states. Entire industries and occupations depended on that system, all of which had been legitimized for centuries by militarist ideologies.

Similarly, America's economic system has been based for over a century on inexpensive fossil fuels—first coal for steam engines and electrical generating plants and then petroleum to power internal combustion and jet engines. Because fossil fuels were plentiful relative to demand and thus cheap, there was no incentive to economize on their use, and the country's transportation and other physical systems used lavish amounts of them. In the twentieth century, America's cities and its entire pattern of land use were redesigned to accommodate the automobile, and extravagant amounts of energy were used building roads, single-family suburban dwellings, and the energy-wasteful cars themselves. Coal-fired power plants provided cheap electricity used with little concern for efficiency to light, heat, and cool buildings; to manufacture a vast, endless flow of goods; and to operate innumerable appliances.

Indeed, while America's preeminent position in the world has rested on its military power, including nuclear weapons, its entire domestic civilization has been based on cheap fossil fuels. To discover, therefore, that burning these fuels is precipitating changes in climate that imperil agriculture and indeed life as we know it is an inconvenient truth that few have been prepared to take seriously. Until recently, the average person in capitalist America rarely thought about such things as nuclear proliferation or global warming, devoting most of their time and energy traveling to and from work, surviving their dysfunctional workplaces, and maintaining relationships with family and friends. Few politicians would risk their careers by challenging such pillars of American power and prosperity as the weapons contractors and oil companies. Even peace and environmental activists—and the foundations that funded them—found themselves ignoring the big threats to humanity in order to focus on this or that legislative priority and wield what little influence they could inside the Washington Beltway (Cabasso 2007b; Gelbspan 2004).

All this is changing. Reminiscent of the 1960s and 1970s countercultural revolution, the Occupy Wall Street movement that began in September 2011 triggered similar protests in dozens of other American cities. The middle class is fighting back at a system of state capitalism that

is destroying their livelihoods, their security, and the ecological foundations of future peace and prosperity. Pentagon officials and corporate CEOs —masters of the universe during the so called "American century"—are no longer the only ones defining "reality." The obsolete modes of thinking that had locked America into a trajectory of war and ecological collapse are losing their grip. Einstein would be pleased. Whether it will prove to be too little, too late remains to be seen. But political conditions are emerging for a transformation of state capitalism that can secure a just and humane future, if anything can.

What is the nature of this transformation? The Occupy movement is now in the process of defining its goals. I would like to suggest that its protagonists are, most fundamentally, searching for what has been called "human security" (Cabasso 2007b). By contrast with "national security"—which served the interests of nation-states and power elites—human security is the condition in which ordinary people can meet their basic and higher needs.[6] It is similar to what President Franklin D. Roosevelt called the "Four Freedoms": (1) freedom of speech and expression, (2) freedom of religion, (3) freedom from want, and (4) freedom from fear (Cabasso 2007b). Human security—defined in these or similar terms—is the true aim of government, not the freedom of rich and powerful people to accumulate more wealth and power at the expense of others.

The concept of human security differs in three ways from the old state capitalist modes of thinking (Cabasso 2007b). First, it is truly universal, rejecting the double standards that have plagued America throughout its history. Poverty, for example, disproportionately affects certain groups, such as blacks and Hispanics, a state of affairs indicating that the needs of some people are currently considered more important than those of others. Human security is a condition that applies equally to all.

Second, human security is global, not something that can be achieved only by Americans while poverty, violence, and disease afflict hundreds of millions of people in other parts of the world. This global sensibility is already familiar to Americans, who respond empathically to news

6. By "basic needs," I mean freedom from violence; an unpolluted environment; access to clean water and healthy food; access to other necessities, including clothing, housing, and health care; and employment at a living wage in a nonabusive, safe, and healthy workplace. By "higher needs," I mean political and religious freedom, political participation, time for and access to cultural activities, loving community, and self-realization. Maslow (1987) provides a similar typology. As explained later in this chapter in my discussion of subsidiarity and responsibility, I am not arguing that government can or should directly supply all these needs. What I am arguing is that the true purpose of government is to enable all people to satisfy these needs, not to enable the few to dominate others and accumulate wealth without limit.

coverage of wars, natural disasters, and other conditions that cause appalling suffering abroad. Such coverage, however, rarely explains the role of the American power elite in much of this suffering. The U.S. government, for example, has a long history of providing military aid to dictatorships, and the oil and coal companies are the driving force behind the climate change that makes extreme floods, droughts, and hurricanes increasingly common worldwide. Along with an awareness of global problems, citizens need to understand their causes, including the role of state capitalist institutions and policies.

Third, and following from its universal and global character, human security is indivisible. This means that the security of some groups cannot be advanced by negating the security of others, as when austerity measures spare the wealthy while balancing government budgets on the backs of those who can least afford it. Similarly, the pursuit of military supremacy violates the principle of indivisibility because it advances the security of one country at the expense of others. These characteristics of human security—its universality, global dimensions, and indivisibility—require new modes of thinking that break from violence-based, state-centered national security as well as from capitalist accumulation of wealth through exploitation of ordinary people's labor.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will identify the core policy strategies through which a government for the people can make the good life a reality for every American while simultaneously enhancing human security throughout the world. Here, I want to note the essential role of government planning in formulating and implementing such policies (Klein 2011). It is a widely held myth in the United States, cultivated by conservatives ever since the New Deal, that government planning is the hallmark of socialist and communist societies and is alien to America's free market traditions.

In reality, government planning is as American as apple pie. It is what built the county's roads, bridges and tunnels, culminating in the interstate highway system in the second half of the twentieth century. It is what mobilized the country's human and physical capital to defeat Nazi Germany and imperial Japan. Government planning is responsible for such diverse inventions as the atomic bomb and the Internet. It is what landed humans on the moon and brought them safely back to earth and what built and administered the largest military and commercial empire in history. I have never met a conservative who repudiates any of these achievements, yet conservatives unanimously denounce with great fury the government planning that made them possible. This contradiction makes a mockery of American conservatism and the Republican Party.

Peace and sustainable prosperity cannot be secured without government planning. The latter needs to be done in concert with individuals and enterprises acting in markets, to be sure, but markets alone could never have achieved the previously mentioned technical and organizational feats, nor can it achieve similar feats in the future such as building a green infrastructure, reversing climate change, and eradicating global poverty. The question is not whether the U.S. government should or will engage in planning on a massive scale but rather to what ends that planning will be directed and whose needs it will serve. Planning for human security on behalf of all the people is now the only rational option, and time is running out to choose that option and implement it.

THE ENERGY CHALLENGE: SPEEDING UP THE TRANSITION

Big challenges such as nuclear proliferation and climate change, when they are addressed in the halls of power, are addressed in entirely the wrong way. Many policymakers concede that nuclear disarmament and reducing levels of CO_2 emission are desirable goals but dismiss them as not possible or feasible in a short time frame, say, 5 or 10 years. Instead, they adopt a planning framework that takes the underlying problem as a given and then ask what more limited steps can be taken to mitigate it. This indicates that leaders are paying lip service to a goal but not really taking it seriously. The contrast with other goals that *were* taken seriously is instructive.

In October 1939, for example, Franklin D. Roosevelt received a letter from Albert Einstein informing him that it might be possible to build a nuclear fission bomb of unprecedented destructiveness and that Nazi Germany was stockpiling uranium and proceeding with fission research. The president immediately formed an advisory committee and through a series of further actions set in motion the Manhattan Project, culminating in the detonation of the first atomic bomb in the New Mexico desert less than six years later.

Like other great achievements, this one in retrospect has come to seem inevitable. In 1939, however, it was by no means clear that an atomic bomb could actually be built, as Einstein himself admitted. It would have been easy for Roosevelt to dismiss as mere speculation the inconvenient truth that such devices might actually be built and remain focused on military problems of more immediate relevance. But the president judged the possibility of Hitler developing an atomic bomb before United States

to be an unacceptable risk, and he allocated and mobilized the resources needed to minimize that risk.

Nor was the mission of the Manhattan Project to determine whether an atomic bomb was possible. Rather, proceeding on the assumption that it was, the project's mission was to build one and to do so in the shortest possible time. This required an extraordinary amount of government planning and the administration of science and technology on an unprecedented scale to accomplish something that might, in the end, have been impossible. But the stakes were deemed too high for delay or indecision, and policymakers rose to the occasion, taking all necessary actions to accomplish the goal and deferring for the future the question of whether it was possible to do so.

The existential threat to American security posed by Hitler in 1939 and the resolve, creativity, and competence with which the country met that challenge constitute a precedent for the threat of ecological collapse today and the kind of government planning and action needed to avert it. In the present case, climate scientists know that reducing CO_2 emissions will reverse global warming, and the challenge is to accomplish this before a catastrophic and irreversible change in the earth's climate occurs. Specifically, given the dependence of existing technologies and the world economy on fossil fuels, how can renewable energy technologies be developed and deployed fast enough to reverse global warming? Most energy economists agree that renewables will become cheaper than fossil fuels in perhaps another decade, at which point market forces will effect a transition from the latter to the former. Climate scientists warn that such a timetable is much too slow (Brown 2009; Harvey 2011; Richardson et al. 2009), but it is not obvious whether or how the transition to renewables can be speeded up in time to avert ecological collapse.

Reflecting the inertia of the fossil fuel economy, the conventional wisdom in Washington and corporate America is that a significantly faster transition to renewables is simply not possible or feasible and that global CO_2 emissions will continue to rise during the interim. In such a planning framework, it is entirely reasonable for America to expand the production of its own fossil fuels, especially coal and natural gas, which it possesses in abundance. The United States should also promote research and development on renewables, according to this state capitalist view, but should defer large-scale implementation until cost-efficient technologies have been developed.

In order to adopt this planning framework, however, policymakers must ignore or deny the certainty of ecological collapse if current trends are not altered in the very near future. While the exact length of time

available for making this transition is not known, Roosevelt faced similar uncertainty about development of the atomic bomb and did not invoke such uncertainty as an excuse for inaction. In reality, the only relevant question today is not whether reducing CO_2 emissions in the short term is possible or feasible but rather how to do it. If the feat proves impossible, humanity will at least go down fighting, and the outcome will be no worse than would occur with business as usual. But if there is indeed a way out—and the only rational course is to proceed on that assumption—solutions must be pursued with the utmost speed. Since the state capitalist system seems incapable of responding to the climate crisis and other urgent challenges in this appropriate way, rational and responsible people need to replace it with a government for the people that can serve the needs of human security. And this revolution must occur in the shortest possible time.

As explained next, a set of three interrelated policy strategies provides the best hope of decreasing global CO_2 emissions in time to stabilize earth's climate. Taken together, these three strategies map out a green New Deal, a path to the sustainable society of the future. First, a steep carbon tax is needed to make renewable energy technologies less costly than those based on fossil fuels and to create incentives for the efficient use of energy and materials. Second, a massive program of public investment in renewable energy infrastructure is needed to absorb and redirect the human and physical capital idled by the rapid phasing out of the fossil fuel economy and other wasteful economic activity, including the bloated national security state. Third, the scale and types of public investment must be tailored so as to utilize all idle human and physical capital in the economy, and government must provide all necessary job retraining needed to accomplish this.

TOTAL EFFICIENCY: ENERGY AND MATERIALS

The amount of CO_2 reduction needed for human security and the requirements for achieving it have been rigorously determined. A report by the International Alliance of Research Universities (Richardson et al. 2009) estimates that holding average atmospheric temperature at a ceiling of 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels is needed to avert dangerous climate change. This, in turn, would require an immediate 60 to 80 percent reduction in global CO_2 emissions. Recognizing the implausibility of such an achievement, the report concludes, "To limit the extent of overshoot, emissions should peak in the near future." Fatih Birol, chief economist at the International Energy Agency, has calculated that global

fossil fuel infrastructure being constructed at its current pace will lock the world into irreversible climate change by 2015 (Harvey 2011).

These warnings are not alarmist propaganda but the sober conclusions of eminent scientists backed by a large body of peer-reviewed research. Rationality demands an immediate, all-out mobilization of the U.S. government to slash CO_2 emissions while working collaboratively with top leaders from China and other large CO_2-emitting countries. Whatever the outcome of such collaboration, the United States should be racing into the future to reduce emissions—not waiting for other countries to act but doing its own part and influencing them through its example and diplomacy. Nor is this only a matter of global responsibility since the first country to retool for a sustainable future will gain a competitive advantage in the world economy, a point not lost on Chinese leaders. Let Republicans frame the problem as a national security and commercial race against China, if they wish, and Democrats as a race against global warming. The result is the same—the need for a total mobilization of human and physical resources comparable to the U.S. war effort against Hitler.

The measurable requirements for achieving the needed carbon emission reduction are also clear. In 1993, Japanese energy economist Yoichi Kaya identified the relevant parameters and their relationship in a single equation (Kaya and Yokobori 1993). Now known as the Kaya identity, it states that global CO_2 emission from human sources is obtained by multiplying four factors: population size, gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, energy use per unit of GDP, and carbon emissions per unit of energy consumed. The first of these, population, is an important variable for the intermediate and long term but is not amenable to reduction by public policy in the relevant time frame. Reduction of carbon emissions therefore hinges on the remaining three factors, which are easily translated into policy objectives.

Two of the factors—GDP and energy use per unit of GDP—can be reduced substantially with little adverse impact on the quality of life of ordinary people through a green New Deal. Major policy elements of such a strategy include rapid downsizing of the defense sector, as discussed later in this chapter; modification of all building construction plans to conform to LEEDS standards for energy efficiency; suspending the manufacture of appliances that do not meet stringent efficiency standards, nonessential manufacturing that uses energy-intensive or energy-wasteful processes, the manufacture of unnecessary, energy-wasteful luxury and consumer products, such as private jets and sport-utility vehicles; and substitution of whole foods for highly processed and packaged foods (which will actually produce health benefits, reducing health care costs). In a kind

of reverse multiplier effect, stopping all this inefficient economic activity will produce further reductions, such as canceling the construction of new mining, manufacturing, and office facilities that would have been needed to support all the economic activities listed above.

All nonessential household consumption must be postponed, much as occurred in the United States during World War II. But as the above list indicates, a vast amount of the country's GDP consists of economic activity that does not contribute to the standard of living of ordinary people. Indeed, one of the most pernicious examples of obsolete, state capitalist modes of thinking is the confusion of GDP with quality of life (Cobb, Halstead, and Rowe 1995). The former includes spending on war, energy use that pollutes the environment, and medical treatment for preventable illnesses and injuries—economic activities that are negatively correlated with quality of life. By contrast, the latter includes such noneconomic "goods" as clean air, freedom from workplace stress, and more time for cultural activities and political participation. New measures of quality of life, such as the Genuine Progress Indicator (Gast 2010), must be adopted in place of GDP, which should be retained only for statistical purposes as an aggregate measure of energy-consuming activity.

The final factor in the Kaya equation—carbon emissions per unit of energy consumed—indicates the need for an immediate cessation of oil, coal, and natural gas exploration as well as cancellation of planned construction of extraction and processing facilities for these fossil fuels and a rapid phasing out of the production and use of these fuels to very low levels.

The economic reductions indicated above can be achieved largely through market mechanisms by instituting carbon taxes that set the average price of energy from fossil fuels higher than from existing renewable technologies. Oil, coal, and natural gas should be taxed at rates reflecting the emissions they generate when burned (Stiglitz 2007). Subsidies for fossil fuels and agribusiness should be diverted to the design and rapid deployment of a renewable energy infrastructure and for such activities as reforestation, preservation of tropical rain forests, and less capital- and energy-intensive organic agriculture (see Appendix 5.1). Additional funding for these initiatives can come from the carbon taxes, a progressive consumption tax,[7] and increased income taxes on the rich.

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7. Like a value added tax, a progressive consumption tax would have very high rates on luxury items, high to moderate rates on non-essential consumer goods, and no tax on food and other necessities. This kind of tax would create incentives for households to forgo unnecessary consumption while having minimal impact on the poor.

PUBLIC INVESTMENT, SUBSIDIARITY, AND RESPONSIBILITY: PATH TO A GREEN NEW DEAL

The steep carbon tax (or equivalent carbon reduction policy) proposed here is an absolute, objective requirement for averting catastrophic ecological and social upheavals that are already beginning to engulf the world. For that reason, the policy should be an urgent and nonnegotiable demand for democratic mass movements in the United States and elsewhere. But all public policies have economic consequences, and an effective mass movement must understand what these are and how they can be managed. Indeed, a single policy strategy, such as a carbon tax, must be pursued as part of a coherently designed set of synergistic strategies that move in the same direction of a humane and sustainable future.

The most obvious consequence of steep and rapidly implemented carbon taxes is the massive unemployment and idling of physical capital that would occur—in the absence of countervailing policies—during the period of transition from an energy wasteful economy based on fossil fuels to an efficient one based on renewable energy. The needed countervailing policy strategy is a well-planned program of public investment—at the federal, state, and local levels—in the green infrastructure of tomorrow. "Well planned" means coherently designed to meet the economic needs of human security, not a hodgepodge of pork-barrel projects and earmarks designed to serve the short-term political priorities of legislators or the profits of contractors. Public investment is the second of three synergistic policy strategies proposed here. It should be determined through a process of democratic planning and coordinated among the levels of government through the principle of subsidiarity, that is, in the most decentralized way possible consistent with national and international goals and objectives.[8]

For example, anything that can be done efficiently by individuals, cooperatives, and firms should be done at that level, delegating the rest to government. Of the remaining policy needs, municipal governments should undertake everything that can be done at the local level, delegating the rest upward and so on up through the states, regional planning bodies, the federal government, and the United Nations and other global planning forums. Subsidiarity ensures that the federal government

8. The concept of subsidiarity that I am proposing here is an approach to coordinating grassroots, local initiatives with national government planning, both of which are necessary to averting catastrophic climate change, as discussed by Naomi Klein (2011).

undertake only such planning and implementation as cannot be or is not being handled by lower levels. As for the United Nations, its powers are limited not only by subsidiarity but also by its dependence on nation-states for financing and authorization of major policies.

The principle of subsidiarity may be understood as the general presumption that decentralized actors do not need authorization from a higher level to act. This must be combined, I would argue, with the principle of responsibility, according to which every actor at every level has an *obligation* to take effective and appropriate action on behalf of human security. This entails social responsibility by individuals and firms as well as the responsibility by various levels of government to correct externalities and other market failures to the extent that they can be corrected. If entrepreneurs do not want government imposing onerous regulations, then let them practice social responsibility, making such regulations unnecessary.

The days are over when it is acceptable for corporations to externalize their costs onto their workers and to saddle future generations with the ecological consequences of short-term profit seeking. Whenever the private sector is unable or unwilling to act in ways consistent with the public interest, responsibility passes to the next-highest level beginning with municipal governments. It continues up through the governmental hierarchy so that the problems that eventually land on the president's desk and the congressional docket are only those that cannot be (or at least have not been) solved at lower levels. An aroused public must hold individuals, firms, and every level of government accountable for discharging the responsibilities appropriate to the various levels.

In *Manufacturing Green Prosperity: The Power to Rebuild the American Middle Class*, Jon Rynn (2010) depicts in greater detail what the program of public investment I am advocating—a kind of green New Deal—might look like. Needed projects include rail and other public transportation systems, urban construction designed for sustainability and energy efficiency, and a green energy infrastructure that includes solar, wind, and geothermal technologies. Rynn notes that public investments of this kind and scale would set in motion a rebirth of American manufacturing, revitalizing the private sector and putting the country back on the road to prosperity for the middle class, though this needs to be redefined in a postconsumerist framework (Cobb et al. 1995; Klein 2011).

In addition to this infrastructure and manufacturing agenda, human security requires public investment in what some call biological capital. First, the United States needs an energy-efficient and health-promoting food system based on organic plant and animal agriculture, minimal food

processing, and minimal intermediaries between food producers and consumers (see Appendix 5.1). Government subsidies paid to agribusiness should be eliminated immediately and the revenues used to pay the transition and start-up costs for this sustainable food system, which will be operated mostly by small farmers and farming cooperatives (see Appendix 5.1). Rynn (2010) suggests that the outermost ring of land around a given urban area be devoted to such food production, with clean, energy-efficient manufacturing in the middle ring and residential and commercial spaces in the core. Finally, the planting of trees and other projects to restore and conserve vital ecosystems (Brown 2009) are important components of the program of public investment proposed here.

TOTAL UTILIZATION: HUMAN RESOURCES AND PHYSICAL CAPITAL

The third policy strategy, operating in concert with new taxes and massive public investment, is the total utilization of human and physical capital. This strategy cuts the Gordian knot of macroeconomic controversies about full employment with the simple proposition that governments at every level must be the employers of last resort. Any citizen who wants to work or needs the income is entitled to a productive job, which must be provided by government if it is not available in the private sector. The notion that governments at every level must cut back services and public employment in order to balance their budgets is a perverse way of reckoning costs and constitutes an intolerable attack on human security. Such austerity is the logical if vicious consequence of state capitalism and thus a *reductio ad absurdum* of its fundamental assumptions.

The public investment projects outlined above can be expanded to any desired level in order to meet the employment needs of the country. A government for the people will undertake public works on whatever scale is necessary to fully utilize the country's human and physical capital. Projects must be created that utilize skills and physical resources that are currently or will be idled by the phasing out of obsolete institutions and technologies.[9] Along with such planning, a great deal of training and

9. Many of the planning tools for accomplishing this already exist or can be created by adapting existing tools. The field of "input-output analysis" contains a vast body of theory and successful policy applications involving similar problems (Raa 2005).

retraining will be needed. Much of this can be achieved by assigning those needing jobs to various projects as apprentices based on transferable skills they already have.

As with the New Deal, experimentation will be needed, and some solutions will emerge through trial and error. America has succeeded at this before. New Deal projects, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority, construction of the Triborough Bridge, and the Civilian Conservation Corps put tens of millions of people to work and created public infrastructure and biological capital of enduring value. As a matter of public policy, all manufacturing and other contracts created by public investment must be used to employ U.S. citizens, except where Americans with the requisite skills are not available.

Where would the funding for all this come from? Some of it would come from carbon and progressive consumption taxes as well as higher income taxes on the rich. Some of it will come from existing tax revenues currently being squandered on the national security state, which is also the source of much physical capital and human resources that will be required. Finally, some of it will come from government borrowing, at least in the short term. This can primarily take the form of small-denomination government bonds purchased by middle-class citizens, who, as in World War II, will be reducing unnecessary consumption to meet a pressing national emergency and thus having funds to invest. Since the Green New Deal's public investments will greatly increase the country's capacity to create wealth in the future, even a large increase in new government debt incurred for that purpose would be sustainable, unlike much of the existing debt that was incurred for unproductive military and other pork-barrel programs.[10]

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10. The American Monetary Institute (2011) correctly notes that government can simply print money to pay for investment in productive infrastructure inasmuch as such investment increases the real economy and thereby requires an increase in the money supply to prevent deflation. This method of funding will not be available during the early years of a Green New Deal, however, during which GDP will be reduced as part of an overall plan for averting catastrophic climate change. Note that such a reduction in GDP, which would normally result in reduced employment, can be accompanied by *increased* employment as long as capital- and energy-intensive and high-value-added activities like weapons manufacturing are replaced with labor-intensive and low-value-added activities such as planting trees and installing solar energy panels. To avoid inflation, people employed in these low-value-added activities cannot initially be paid at the same level as existing government employees, which was also the case in Roosevelt's New Deal. As the energy-efficient and renewable economy is phased in, however, the country's capacity to produce increasing wealth with minimal carbon emissions will enable an increase in public wages and funding of further public investment through an increase in the money supply.

There is absolutely no excuse for even a single person in America to be looking for productive, paid work and being unable to find it. That includes teenagers looking for summer jobs, the elderly, and the disabled. It is the responsibility of government to combine human and physical capital and organize production to meet real human needs whenever and to whatever extent the private sector fails to do so. That state capitalism fails miserably to accomplish this is a scathing indictment and sufficient reason to replace it with a government for the people.

The rapid phasing in of steep carbon taxes and the rapid downsizing of America's national security state, discussed next, will create an unprecedented amount of economic dislocation. Massive public investment will mitigate these effects and facilitate a rapid and efficient adaptation of human and physical capital to the new, sustainable economy. The retraining programs required to accomplish this are themselves part of the needed investment and must be provided by government to whatever extent the private sector fails to provide them.

Related to this, time and resources must be allocated to job counseling and placement in order to make maximum use of the country's human resources. If a person has academic skills, for example, she will probably be better off apprenticed to a public school than to a tree planting operation, but an even better use of her unique mix of gifts and interests may exist. Such solutions benefit both the individual and society. Job counselors who can help find them are a higher-order human resource that government should mobilize to whatever extent the private sector fails to do so.

One area of pubic investment that can absorb large amounts of human and physical capital to good effect is primary and secondary education. Renovating, building, and equipping adequate facilities in school districts that serve the poor will both employ millions in poor neighborhoods[11] and help reclaim the human potential of disadvantaged children.

11. Accomplishing this will require novel solutions to novel problems. On the one hand, priority in hiring must be given to unemployed residents in poor neighborhoods. On the other hand, few of these residents are members of construction unions and most will require training. One solution is to greatly expand union apprenticeship programs. This can be done in the context of Mondragon-type producer cooperatives (Nembhard and Haynes 2002), formed through democratic collaboration between unions and community organizations, a model that can also be applied to housing. An important principle in all such initiatives is the need to build "social capital"—which involves relationships and community—not only tangible "bricks and mortar" products (Karan 2002).

Similarly, a large expansion of the teaching workforce is needed to reduce class sizes in underfunded school districts to the same levels that exist in affluent suburban districts. The unmet needs in the country's public schools are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7.

Finally, making the transition to a low-carbon economy in time to avert ecological catastrophe will require a massive mobilization of science and technology. Some American scientists and inventors are already doing cutting-edge renewable energy work. Government should be providing every possible support for such work, including ample funding. It should simultaneously assemble its own renewable energy team, building on and learning from the experience of the Manhattan Project, NASA, and other successful government research-and-development programs. Consistent with the principle of subsidiarity, the federal government's program should focus on needed research that private industry, universities, and lower levels of government cannot do well (or at all) or are simply not doing for whatever reason.

It is not my concern in this book, nor should it be the concern of the masses of people joining the progressive movement, how all this can be accomplished at the detailed policy or technical levels. Roosevelt was not and did not have to be a research administrator or nuclear engineer to set the country's scientific and technical personnel to work building an atomic bomb. It was his role only to frame the overall policy goal of building a bomb before the Third Reich did. Today, the policy goal of overriding importance and urgency is reducing CO_2 emissions in time to reverse catastrophic climate change, and the masses of people must demand it since elites appear unwilling or unable set priorities appropriately.

If there are policy strategies more effective and viable to this end than those sketched here, let others put them forth immediately and let Congress debate them and enact the best ones in the very near future. If Congress or the Supreme Court obstruct or delay such action, let the American people assert their unique, sovereign power to institute new constitutional arrangements—as the founding fathers did in 1787—in the present case by putting the alternatives to a direct vote of the people in a national referendum (see Chapter 8).

SELF-DEFENSE AND COLLECTIVE SECURITY

The transition from a "national security" paradigm promoting the power of the state and its elites to one based on human security and the

needs of ordinary people will free up a vast amount of human resources and physical capital currently being squandered on unnecessary military programs. There are only two circumstances in which the use of force is legal and legitimate under the UN Charter and current international law (United Nations 1945). The first—"self-defense"—is narrowly defined under Article 51 of the UN Charter as a state's right to repel an armed attack on its territory, for example, the Syrian and Egyptian attack on Israel in 1973. The second—"collective security"—is when a state participates in a UN-authorized military action to repel such an attack, protect citizens from genocide, or address some similarly serious threat to international peace and security. In 2011, for example, the UN Security Council authorized air strikes against the forces of Muammar Gaddafi when their slaughter of the civilian population of Benghazi appeared imminent.

American elites commonly discuss whether a given military action serves U.S. "interests." It was in those terms, for example, that many Republicans opposed U.S. participation in the operation against Gaddafi's forces. In fact, however, any threat or use of force in pursuit of "national interests"—which in practice generally means *corporate* interests—is an act of aggression and is defined under the Nuremberg Principles as a "crime against peace" (United Nations International Law Commission 1950). Whenever an American politician or pundit utters the phrase "national interest" in the context of possible military action, a progressive mass movement should pounce on them and identify their discourse as criminal.

The same elites who justify war by invoking national interests typically—and not surprisingly—dismiss international law as utopian and the United Nations as irrelevant. But most ordinary Americans believe that the true purposes of U.S. military power are, in fact, to protect the country from attack and uphold peace and human rights abroad. They need to understand that these commonsense beliefs about what are legitimate uses of force are actually aligned with international law, and that elites who vilify the latter are seeking to justify self-serving abuses of military power. Further, a progressive mass movement must be alert to deceptive appeals to humanitarian imperatives and self-defense to legitimize aggression. This occurred, for example, when the George W. Bush administration invoked Saddam Hussein's heinous human rights violations and alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction to justify an invasion that was really in the service of corporate interests (Chomsky 2003, 2008).

Clarity about the only legitimate uses of force must be the starting point for any analysis of the troops and weapons a country truly needs. Such clarity rules out the vast bulk of what the United States currently spends on national security. As in the case of energy policy, a mass movement does not need to concern itself with debates about technical policy matters but does need to understand in broad terms the military capabilities the United States really needs to promote human security at home and abroad.

As discussed in Chapter 1, U.S. military and other national security expenditures support a policy of "full-spectrum dominance" or "projecting power" around the globe, policy objectives for which there is no basis in international law. These capabilities include over 700 military bases on foreign soil, some 1.8 million troops, and tens of thousands of vehicles and weapon systems, including fighter jets, missiles, aircraft carriers, battleships, tanks, and several thousand nuclear warheads deployed on bombers, submarines, land-based missiles, and other delivery systems. In addition, hundreds of thousands of civilian personnel administer the whole system from the Pentagon and local offices. The national security state includes additional workers and physical infrastructure in other entities besides the Department of Defense, such as the CIA, the State Department's military aid programs, the Department of Energy's nuclear weapons complex, and the defense divisions of civilian corporations, which operate under contracts administered by the Pentagon.

Very little of these human resources and physical capital are designed to either repel attacks on U.S. territory or participate in UN-authorized collective security actions, the only uses of force that are legal and legitimate. These extraneous capabilities include most of the country's nuclear arsenal and its air-, sea-, and land-based delivery systems. Nuclear weapons, however, raise special security problems that we must now confront. The same is true of missile defense systems, that is, missiles and other technology—much of it in the research-and-development phase—designed to intercept incoming missiles.

Many religious leaders and legal scholars have long questioned the legitimacy of nuclear deterrence on grounds that virtually any use of such indiscriminate weapons would involve the mass slaughter of civilians and radioactive contamination that cannot be contained to the battlefield (Chullikatt 2011; Moxley, Burroughs, and

Granoff 2011).[12] In a 1995 advisory opinion, the International Court of Justice definitively affirmed this position, ruling that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is generally prohibited under international law and that the complete abolition of nuclear weapons is an urgent legal and political imperative (Burroughs 1998). While President Obama did express support for abolition—the only president other than Ronald Reagan to do so—his administration has done little or nothing to plan for it. On the contrary, nuclear deterrence remains an integral part of U.S. military policy (Moxley 2011).

A government for the people should move rapidly to expedite a nuclear weapons convention, that is, an international treaty for abolishing nuclear weapons (United Nations 2007; Weiss, 2011). It is a conservative myth that such a treaty would unrealistically require the United States to trust other countries to carry out their disarmament obligations. Rather, a nuclear weapons convention would include a system of inspections to ensure that all nuclear weapons are being duly dismantled and that no radioactive material is being stockpiled for future military use (United Nations 2007). Such a system can never be foolproof, of course, but its inherent dangers are far less than those of current arrangements. By eliminating existing weapon stockpiles and putting radioactive materials under strict international surveillance, for example, a nuclear weapons

12. Apologists for U.S. nuclear policy concede the illegitimacy of mass destruction but argue that the whole point of deterrence—the threat to use nuclear weapons—is precisely to *prevent* their actual use (Ikle et al. 1988; Kissinger 1969). They typically argue that the nuclear-armed United States and Soviet Union refrained from major war for more than forty years, evidence that nuclear deterrence works. These arguments do not hold up to rational scrutiny.

First, it is a well-established principle of international relations that a threat can be effective only if it is credible, which requires a resolve to actually follow through on the threat (Schelling 1981). Consistent with this principle and rarely discussed publicly, the United States and other nuclear-armed states are constantly engaged in operational planning for nuclear war, and America's nuclear weapons are currently on hair-trigger alert and ready to be used in minutes on orders from the president. In law, the threat or preparation to commit a crime is itself a kind of criminal act, known as an "inchoate crime," and criminal acts are not rendered legal by any theories that the actors use to justify their acts to themselves and others (Lifton and Falk 1982; Lifton and Markusen 1990).

Second, the apparent success of the U.S.-Soviet "balance of terror" was almost certainly the result of luck, not the supposed rationality of being willing to perform the unthinkable in order to prevent it (D'Agostino 1993). There were numerous incidents during the Cold War, also rarely discussed publicly, when nuclear war would most likely have occurred because of an accident or miscalculation and was prevented only by some lucky event. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, for example, a Soviet commander mistakenly believed that his submarine was under attack and wanted to launch a nuclear counterattack that could easily have triggered World War III and the annihilation of both superpowers. He was persuaded not to do so only because an insistent subordinate managed to calm him down (Lloyd 2002).

convention would greatly reduce the chances of a terrorist group acquiring a nuclear weapon. During the time it will take for a nuclear weapons convention to be negotiated and implemented, a government for the people can unilaterally downsize the country's nuclear arsenal to a minimum deterrent of perhaps a few dozen weapons, unwind its deterrence posture by taking weapons off alert, and begin planning for security without nuclear weapons.

As for missile defenses, first promoted by Ronald Reagan as an alternative to nuclear deterrence, the whole notion is reminiscent of France's Maginot Line, a system of fortifications that was easily circumvented by German forces in 1940 (Kaufmann et al. 2011). How would a missile defense system, for example, prevent a nuclear weapon from being delivered by ship and detonated in a port city of the target country? Or how would it prevent a "rogue state" from delivering a nuclear weapon on a commercial airliner? In addition, missile defense systems are vulnerable to being overwhelmed by decoys and other countermeasures (Moore 2008). Research and development on missile defense systems is a complete waste of taxpayers' money and should be canceled immediately.

Given America's geographic isolation and borders with countries that pose no military threat and given the ineffectiveness of missile defense systems to protect the country's territory, the United States has little need for "self-defense" forces under Article 51 of the UN Charter. It does need measures to prevent terrorism, of course, but military forces are of little use for that purpose. The only remaining question is what forces it should retain to participate in UN collective security actions. This is a question that can and should be debated by experts, but however it is answered, collective security will legitimately require only a fraction of the military forces that the United States currently maintains. This is good news indeed, because the United States cannot continue to send over a hundred billion dollars abroad every year to maintain a far-flung empire and needs every bit of physical capital and human resources it can muster at home to make a rapid transition to a sustainable economy.

To be sure, demilitarization by the United States will involve many changes in the current system of international security. Global Action to Prevent War and Armed Conflict (2008) has assembled a set of policy ideas for a phased reduction of national armed forces worldwide and the simultaneous buildup of regional and global security arrangements. While American state capitalism is the single biggest obstacle to such a plan, a government for the people could be its single biggest champion. The United States can and should immediately shift its foreign policy planning framework from one predicated on an international system

based on heavily armed states to one characterized by demilitarization along the lines envisioned by Global Action. Given the absence of conventional military threats to the country's homeland due to its geographic isolation, such a shift can be made unilaterally without in any way compromising the country's national security. This same geographically based security advantage, combined with its economic preeminence, also puts the United States in a unique position to proactively promote a new, demilitarized system of international security.

There are three policy strategies for accomplishing the needed downsizing of America's national security state: attrition, redeployment of personnel, and economic conversion of plant and facilities. Like any other organization, the national security state is a dynamic system that is continually hiring new recruits and civilian employees and purchasing new facilities and equipment as other personnel retire and equipment wears out or becomes obsolete. A policy of attrition consists of a hiring freeze and a moratorium on procurement of new military equipment and facilities. The policy can be waived in special cases but only on the condition that national security managers pay for the new hiring and procurement with equivalent cuts in other parts of the system.

Redeployment and economic conversion, the other downsizing strategies, are really only special cases of the previously mentioned strategy for total utilization of human resources and physical capital. Personnel no longer needed in the national security state should be retrained and redeployed in the civilian economy. Many troops and civilian employees learned transferable skills in the military and can work as machinery operators, mechanics, drivers, physical education teachers, or police officers. Many troops with knowledge of foreign languages and countries can be put to work on poverty reduction programs in those places, including the building of waterworks and other infrastructure. Many white-collar workers leaving the Pentagon or private sector defense contractors can continue in their previous occupations as accountants, secretaries, computer technicians, and researchers. Weapons engineers can be retrained as math and science teachers or as builders of the green energy and transportation infrastructures of the future.

Economic conversion involves finding alternative uses for military bases, weapons manufacturing facilities owned by defense contractors, and other physical structures not needed for human security. If this enormous transition were left to the free market, a massive amount of physical capital would be discarded or redeployed in a wasteful manner. But if the U.S. government can operate the Department of Defense—one of the largest planned economies on earth—why can it not redeploy and convert

all these resources in support of ecological sustainability and civilian prosperity? As discussed above, such a transition should be undertaken in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. Workers who manufacture weapons, for example, are far better positioned to find alternative uses of their plant and equipment than government officials in Washington (Melman 1989).

ENDING GLOBAL POVERTY AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

The indivisibility of human security and its global dimensions are nowhere more apparent than in the issue of poverty, which affects rich countries in at least three ways—the transmission of infectious diseases, downward pressure on wages, and terrorism. First, human contact through travel—vastly accelerated by commercial aviation—spreads throughout the world epidemics that originate in unsanitary conditions in developing countries (Wolfe 2011). This was the case with AIDS, for example, which most likely originated in the Congo River valley (Pepin 2011). Similar spillover effects occur within countries, as when infectious diseases in the South Bronx and other poor neighborhoods triggered by municipal service cuts were spread by commuters to affluent suburbs and then nationwide (Wallace and Wallace 2001).

Second, global poverty exerts downward pressure on wages in rich countries through immigration, whether legal or illegal, which increases the supply of labor. In addition, the availability of cheaper labor abroad creates an incentive for capital flight, which deindustrializes advanced economies and reduces the demand for domestic labor. While capital flight began in the United States in the 1970s, the practice eventually made its way to Germany and Japan, whose capitalists have more recently joined the global race to the bottom.

Third, extreme inequality between countries and the resentment it produces create political conditions in poor countries conducive to terrorist movements. This inequality results primarily from a system of international trade that enables the rich countries to become richer by exporting manufactured goods to the poor countries and impedes the latter's efforts to develop their own manufacturing industries (Cobb and Diaz 2009; Diaz 2010; Reinert 2008; Stiglitz 2003, 2007). At the same time, capitalist advertising and consumer culture—transmitted through global media—heighten the awareness in poor countries of their poverty even as they undermine religious traditions and local cultures

(Sachs 2002). It is surely no accident that the 9/11 hijackers—who were religious fundamentalists—struck the World Trade Center, a potent symbol in developing countries of capitalist economic and cultural domination.

For all these reasons, anyone interested in advancing human security needs an understanding of what causes global poverty and how it can be eradicated.[13] According to neoliberal theory, a global economy with no national barriers to the movement of capital or goods was supposed to industrialize the developing countries. The International Monetary Fund, backed by the power of the United States, imposed such "liberalization" on much of the developing world beginning in the 1970s, and Western banks and economists promoted it to the former Soviet republics in the 1990s. These policies produced disappointing results at best in Latin America and Asia, actually increased poverty in sub-Saharan Africa, and created a decadelong economic catastrophe in the former Soviet republics before the latter recovered to the merely disappointing level (Stiglitz 2003).

Meanwhile, a number of Asian countries—most notably South Korea, Japan, China, and India—followed a diametrically different path and achieved dramatically better results (Reinert 2008; Stiglitz 2003). In this approach, which might be called the Asian development model, governments maintained formal and informal trade barriers to protect their own industries from American and European corporations. While neoliberal theory predicted that sheltering firms from the rigors of competition would reward incompetence, their corporations in fact thrived to the point of being able to produce high-quality goods at lower cost than their Western competitors. (China started on this path later than Japan and South Korea and is still working on the quality of its consumer goods.) As discussed in Chapter 2, their lower costs were initially based on cheaper labor, but the Asian development model also featured indigenous finance and capital accumulation, enabling Asian firms to catch up to and even exceed Western producers in capital investment in mechanization and automation.

In fact, contrary to neoliberal theory, Western countries that are rich today industrialized not through free trade but precisely through such government limitation of free trade (Reinert 2008; Stiglitz 2003). In the eighteenth century, for example, India was the world's leading producer of quality textiles. In order to develop its own textile industry, Britain first

13. In the analysis of global poverty that follows, I build on Cobb and Diaz (2009), Diaz (2010), Reinert (2008), and Stiglitz (2003, 2007).

had to ban the import of Indian products (Toussaint 2009). That policy gave British producers protected access to the British market, enabling them to stay in business long enough to learn to match the price and quality of Indian products. To be sure, it was industrial technology that eventually enabled British industry to compensate for India's lower labor costs. But that industrialization took time and could never have occurred without the import ban enacted by Parliament.

Once Britain surpassed India in textile manufacturing, the former no longer needed trade barriers to compete. It was only then that Britain preached free trade to the rest of the world, turning the tables on India and getting rich by exporting more than it imported. Similarly, the United States could not compete with British manufacturing except by imposing steep tariffs on British imports. By the twentieth century, American producers were surpassing their European rivals, and after World War II, the United States became the world's leading promoter of free trade.

At the present time, the developing countries of Latin America, Africa, and parts of Asia need tariffs on foreign imports in order industrialize and capital controls to protect their emerging financial sectors from the big multinational banks (Reinert 2008; Stiglitz 2003, 2007). But the United States, Europe, and Japan use the World Trade Organization and other instruments of political and economic power to oppose such measures. Further, even while preaching free trade, they hypocritically maintain trade barriers against agricultural exports from the developing countries, the latter's main source of foreign exchange revenue. Specifically, the advanced countries generously subsidize agribusiness, harming not only poor farmers in developing countries but also ordinary people in the advanced countries.[14]

A government for the people, recognizing the indivisibility and global dimensions of human security, will take the eradication of world poverty as one of its goals. This can be accomplished by donating as foreign aid about 5 percent of the money that the United States currently spends on its national security state. In order to be effective, such aid programs must be controlled by the recipients, who understand local needs far better than outsiders (Stiglitz 2007). In addition, and most important, the United States should eliminate subsidies to U.S. agribusiness and

14. As discussed in Appendix 5.1, agribusiness increases its profits by externalizing costs in a number of ways, including neglect of its workers' and customers' health needs, and by using unsustainable farming practices that boost present crop yields while imposing ecological costs on future generations.

promote an international trade regime that abolishes agricultural subsidies worldwide and permits developing countries to erect tariffs and capital controls, the only proven path to industrialization.[15]

As for ending political violence, it is not enough to eradicate global poverty, which interacts with noneconomic factors, such as the rage and desire for revenge rooted in individual and group trauma and humiliation (Beisel 2009; deMause 1982; Morrock 2010; Strozier et al. 2010). Al-Qaeda, for example, was formed largely in response to such events as the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestine, and Saudi reliance on U.S. forces for protection from Iraq in 1990 (Dudek et al. 2006). When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in that year, Osama Bin Laden approached Saudi leaders with an offer to lead an international jihad against the Iraqi dictator but was rebuffed (Dudek et al. 2006). Bin Laden and his followers denounced the presence of American troops in Muhammad's native land as an intolerable desecration of Islam, a message that resonated with many Muslims throughout the world and swelled the ranks of Al-Qaeda's supporters and recruits. Bin Laden then launched a plan to destroy the World Trade Center, making his first attempt less than three years later.

To be sure, al-Qaeda is essentially a fundamentalist cult (Strozier et al. 2010), which it would have been regardless of military actions by the Soviets, the United States, and Israel. But it was these actions that transformed what might have been at most a local criminal enterprise into an international terrorist movement. Consistent with this analysis, the second target of the 9/11 hijackers was the Pentagon, which represents nothing if not the arrogance of U.S. military power. All this underscores the need for a new kind of foreign policy based on nonviolent methods for resolving political conflicts. Military power is both ineffective in dealing with such conflicts and provocative of further violence (Johnson 2004). Consistent with this demilitarization of foreign policy, terrorist

15. Like many developing countries, the United States also needs to increase its exports in order to balance its trade accounts. In order for developing countries to industrialize using an export-driven model, highly industrialized European and Asian countries, which are currently net exporters, need to become net importers. This would occur naturally, other things being equal, in the kind of global trade regime discussed above, where agricultural subsidies are dismantled and developing countries erect tariffs on imported manufactures. The effect of these policies will be an eventual depreciation of the euro and the yen against the currencies of developing countries, which should be welcomed as an indication of increasing global equality. The United States, which has been the world's net importer of last resort for more than a quarter of a century, and China, which has been a net exporter during the same period, each need to achieve balanced overall trade accounts. This will require a depreciation of the dollar and an appreciation of the renminbi.

acts by nonstate actors must be framed as crimes and handled as such in national and international courts, not as acts of war against political groups that merit group responses.

These principles of demilitarization and the eradication of global poverty provide the framework for a foreign policy that can actually achieve human security, which—as discussed above—is necessarily universal, global, and indivisible. To be sure, none of this is possible under America's system of state capitalism, in which oil companies, defense contractors, and other corporate interests dominate foreign and defense policy on behalf of the rich. But the Occupy movement and its counterparts in other countries—such as the Arab Spring, UK Uncut, and the Spanish Indignants' movements—suggest that the era of state capitalism may be coming to an end (Global Teach-In 2012). Political forces are now in play that make an American government for the people conceivable and, with that, the kind of foreign policy outlined here.

BEYOND GOVERNMENT: HEALING INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

The establishment of human security requires action by governments, and an American government for the people can exercise important world leadership toward that end. But there are limits to what any government can achieve inasmuch as human relationships are deformed by the traumas and narcissism of individuals and entrenched social pathologies, such as racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice and group hatred (deMause 1982; Morrock 2010). Such problems cannot be completely resolved without the healing of individuals and communities, which requires the involvement of nongovernmental organizations, psychotherapists, anthropologists, religious groups, women's networks, and other forms of what political scientists call "civil society" (Civico 2010, 2012; Conaway and Sen 2005; Lederach 1995, 2005; Orme-Johnson et al 1988; Pintacuda and Civico 1993; Sachs 2002; Wolterstorff 2003).

Rabbi Jonathan Sachs (2002) eloquently expressed the need for such healing:

> For centuries, Jews knew that they or their children risked being murdered simply because they were Jews. Those tears are written into the very fabric of Jewish memory, which is to say, Jewish identity. How can I let go of that pain when it is written into my very soul? And yet I must. For the sake of my children and theirs, not

> yet born. I cannot build their future on the hatreds of the past. . . . The duty I owe my ancestors who died because of their faith is to build a world in which people no longer die because of their faith. (190)

As builders of families and local communities, women often play a uniquely important role in promoting the kind of consciousness Sachs describes and the intergroup reconciliation that can prevent violence or heal the survivors of violent conflict. Yet women are all too often excluded from the governmental arenas in which security arrangements are decided. In 2000, the UN Security Council acknowledged this problem and called for concrete steps to rectify it (Conaway and Sen 2005). This should be an important consideration in America's new foreign policy.

Organized religion has been and continues to be marred by sexism, homophobia, and xenophobia. The traditional equation of women with childbearing drives a cumulative growth in population that is not sustainable and imperils the earth's ecology. Related to this is the notion that sex is inseparable from procreation, a religious basis for the rejection of homosexuality (Scanzoni and Mollenkott 1994). But not all who believe in God hold these views, and it is a mistake of many on the secular left to overlook the struggle between fundamentalists and progressives within each of the world's religions (Lerner 2006; West 1982). The group Opus Dei, for example, interprets Catholicism in a way that legitimizes its right-wing social and political agenda (Walsh 2004), while the Focolare Movement sees the same religious tradition as a call to interreligious dialogue and a global economy of sharing (Gallagher 1998). Rigorous historical scholarship vindicates the progressives, finding that Jesus called for the cancellation of debt (Yoder 1994), for example, and that Muhammad advanced the rights of women (Armstrong 2006; Aslan 2006).

Religion scholar Constance L. Benson (1999) encapsulates why these internal struggles over the authentic meaning of religious traditions matter for the rest of humanity:

> The far-reaching economic, social, and political changes needed to secure a humane future will require far-reaching transformations of consciousness and values. Religious renewal can help bring about the needed consciousness and values, or, in the absence of renewal, the religions of the world can remain part of the problem—continuing to legitimize wealth, patriarchy, and militarism. (215)

Any mass movement that hopes to achieve human security and sustainable global arrangements needs to be as inclusive as possible and welcome

every group committed to these goals. Even rich individuals should be included, provided that they are socially responsible, like Warren Buffet. The success of a government for the people will depend on a civil society that celebrates diversity and fully utilizes the unique contributions of every person and group that wants to participate.

This chapter has outlined policy strategies and far-reaching institutional changes that can transform the capitalist state into a government for the people. But what about capitalism itself? Is that economic system the same as a market economy? What can a progressive mass movement do to create an economic system that serves the needs of ordinary people? To these questions I now turn.

APPENDIX 5.1: REFORMING AGRICULTURAL SUBSIDIES

Agricultural subsidies in the United States, which were originally intended to aid struggling family farmers, today mainly benefit big, highly profitable agriculture corporations and their shareholders. Proponents of these subsidies claim that they lower food prices for the American consumer, but to provide a net benefit, the savings would have to be greater than the direct cost of the subsidies to the taxpayer. Even if this were the case, the subsidies impose much greater—indeed unacceptable—indirect and long-term costs on poor farmers in the developing world, the American consumer, and future generations.

First, by making agribusiness more profitable, the subsidies keep more firms and capital producing food in the advanced countries than would otherwise be the case, increasing the global supply of food and reducing its price. Given that the subsidies come out of taxpayers' pockets, this brings little if any net benefit to consumers in the advanced countries, as noted previously, but has serious negative effects on poor countries by reducing the value of their exports and destroying many of their farmers' livelihoods. In the case of the United States and Mexico, this occurred with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which removed Mexican tariffs even while leaving U.S. subsidies in place. NAFTA had the predictable result of impoverishing millions of Mexicans, creating incentives for them to immigrate to the United States, illegally if necessary. Indeed, the Clinton administration expected the treaty to increase illegal immigration and instituted stronger border controls along with the agreement (Chomsky 2007). While the government acted to limit this flow of displaced Mexican farmers and its

political fallout, agribusiness welcomed it since it would drive down the already low wages of farm-workers in the United States (Chomsky 1994).

Second, big agriculture is an integral part of an obsolete system that produces poor-quality food in a highly inefficient manner (Kenner 2008). Agribusiness firms produce for national and international markets, increasing both transportation costs and the time between harvesting and eating. The latter requires fruits and vegetables to be harvested before they are ripe and guarantees that they will not be fresh by the time they reach the consumer. The produce contains traces of pesticides, and the animal products contain growth hormones that contribute to obesity, by-products of stress resulting from horrendous animal-raising practices, antibiotics that destroy the human body's intestinal flora, and toxic disinfectants, such as formaldehyde. The system wastes a vast amount of energy and materials on transportation, storage, processing, and packaging. The cereal products and other highly processed food that come out of this system are typically depleted of nutrients and fiber while being laced with preservatives, dyes, and other chemicals.

Third, modern agribusiness is based on unsustainable farming practices, and subsidies create incentives to continue them. Big agriculture's fertilizer and pesticide-intensive, highly mechanized, single-crop farming (monoculture) disrupts local ecosystems, pollutes groundwater, degrades soil fertility, and contributes to soil erosion (Brown 2009). Profit-seeking corporations create these problems and then impose the costs on others, such as the workers, local residents, and consumers who get sick from agricultural chemicals and future generations who will inherit barren land.

Indeed, subsidies to agribusiness are high on the list of America's most dysfunctional policies, simultaneously harming indigent farmers in developing countries, perpetuating a food system that poorly serves existing consumers in advanced countries, and degrading ecosystems on which future generations depend. It is even more remarkable that the staunchest defenders of this corporate welfare are conservative Republicans who continually lecture the entire country about the evils of government handouts and out of control spending. But there is a method to the madness: these same politicians are bankrolled by the very agricultural corporations that profit from the subsidies (Center for Responsive Politics 2011).

A government for the people will immediately eliminate subsidies to agribusiness and use the revenues instead to subsidize small organic food producers serving local markets, consistent with the original purpose of federal farm subsidies. Such a policy would simultaneously benefit all

the previously mentioned parties that are harmed by subsidies to big agriculture. One functioning model for sustainable production of healthy food is that of community supported agriculture, where urban consumer cooperatives contract annually with organic farms located near a city. There are dozens of such cooperatives in New York City served by farms in the Hudson Valley that grow a variety of fruits and vegetables (and in some cases meat and dairy products) and ship them fresh every week to a distribution point in the city. The produce for the week is divided equally among the cooperative's shareholders (Just Food 2011).

Consistent with this kind of system, Rynn (2010) suggests that a ring of land around every city should be devoted to producing most of its food supply using sustainable farming methods, thus greatly reducing storage and transportation costs and enabling households to consume produce fresh from the farm.[16] For an eye-opening introduction to modern agribusiness, see the documentary *Food, Inc.* (Kenner 2008).

16. In the transition period that will be required to institute such a system of land use, American consumers can substitute food imports from developing countries for much of the food currently being produced by agribusiness. The foreign exchange that developing countries earn from agricultural exports, if invested in their own manufacturing industries, can enable them to become mostly self-sufficient in manufacturing and thus no longer dependent on agricultural exports for foreign exchange.

Thus, Rynn's model of urban areas supported by local food production and manufacturing is a long-term, sustainable arrangement that can be replicated throughout the world, reducing economic globalization and its attendant transportation costs, long-term environmental costs, and adverse effects on local employment and capital accumulation. This would limit trade to goods and services for which urban areas have true comparative advantage, that is, as defined by Adam Smith and David Ricardo. By contrast with today's neoliberals, who abuse the concepts of the classical economists to legitimize the self-serving power of multinational corporations, Smith and Ricardo viewed trade as increasing overall efficiency only when it meets the economic needs of local and national communities (Korten 2001).

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