

hard-liners do—and it is entirely possible they can realize a version of Che Guevara's old dream of entangling America in not two or three but many Vietnams by creating not two or three but "many Venezuelas." The strategy is to win power by the ballot, conserve and concentrate it through constitutional changes, then create armed militias and monolithic parties. All of it can be financed by the Venezuelan national oil company, and it can be accompanied by social policies carried out by Cuban doctors, teachers, and instructors, and backed by Russian arms.

One of the reasons the soft-Left countries don't go toe to toe with allies of the Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez is that they "all are terrified of being left hanging by Washington," Castañeda says. America has let down its friends by reducing promised drug-fighting aid to Mexico, maintaining high tariffs against Brazilian ethanol, and (so far) failing to pass a trade agreement with Colombia, its "best friend in the hemisphere."

If the new American president seizes the initiative, Castañeda believes, he has a unique chance to leave "a greater mark on the hemispheric relationship than any group of leaders in generations."

## FOREIGN POLICY &amp; DEFENSE

## History Recharged

**THE SOURCE:** "Ending Tyranny: The Past and Future of an Idea" by John Lewis Gaddis, in *The American Interest*, Sept.–Oct. 2008.

FIVE YEARS AFTER HE ENUNCIATED the Truman Doctrine, which promised support for "free peoples

who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities," President Harry S. Truman left office with an approval rating of 26 percent. And the Monroe Doctrine, which put America off limits to further European colonization, largely languished until President James Polk dusted it off in 1845 to support Manifest Destiny. A hundred years from now, could a revived Bush Doctrine help guide U.S. foreign policy? John Lewis Gaddis of Yale, who has been called the dean of Cold War historians, doesn't rule it out.

Gaddis finds the kernel of the Bush Doctrine in a single sentence of President George W. Bush's second inaugural address in 2005. "It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world." The ultimate goal—"ending tyranny in our world"—sounds noble enough. But what about promoting "the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture"?

Democracy is not for every Tom, Dick, and Somalia. It thrives only where security, stability, and the rule of law are established, Gaddis says. Even James Madison, America's fourth president and principal author of *The Federalist*, had his doubts about the form of government. Madison was almost assuredly thinking of Athens, which democratically botched the Peloponnesian War, and Rome, where corruption and violence made the populace toss democracy aside and leap into the arms of Caesar Augustus.

In the 21st century, the imposition of democracy has had a rocky history. Making it the cornerstone of U.S. policy suggests that America knows the

"answer to how people should live their lives," Gaddis writes. But the other half of the Bush Doctrine—ending tyranny—suggests "freeing them to find their own answers."

After the end of the Cold War left the United States the only superpower standing, its leaders became convinced that democracy had triumphed because it was the indispensable political path to success. But when the Bush administration tried to impose it on Iraq, the U.S. actions looked like a ploy to concentrate power in America's own hands.

In his inaugural address, Bush paid tribute to two forms of liberty: promoting democratic movements wherever they push up small green shoots from whatever improbable sand, and ending tyranny, period. In Iraq, Gaddis says, the United States tried the first without notable success. He hopes that the "tyranny" sentence from Bush's second inaugural heralds a return to the earlier notion of liberating people so they can solve their own problems. "But sometimes," he says, "a speech is just a speech."

## FOREIGN POLICY &amp; DEFENSE

## Fortified Diplomacy

**THE SOURCE:** "The Future of Diplomacy: Real Time or Real Estate?" by Jerrold D. Green, in *RAND Review*, Summer 2008.

CONSIDER BELGIUM, A COUNTRY the size of Maryland with 10 million people and some of the world's best food. It is home to no fewer than three magnificent American embassies and missions housing ambassadors and staff that represent U.S. interests in



America's new embassy in Iraq is a fortress made up of two dozen buildings covering 104 acres. Its cost has escalated from \$592 to \$736 million.

Belgium, NATO, and the European Union. In an era dominated by the Internet, cell phones, videoconferencing, and modern airline connections, writes Jerrold D. Green, president of the Pacific Council on International Policy, “policymakers need to reassess whether retaining many traditional in-country functions of embassies still makes sense.”

Embassies such as the one to Belgium, a historic building on a busy underpass recently surrounded by a chainlink fence and a jumble of bollards and barricades, are “vulnerable, expensive, and cumbersome.” They wall diplomats in secluded

safety zones rather than immersing them in local culture.

America will always need representatives stationed overseas to handle sensitive or specialized tasks and to understand the cultural, linguistic, political, and social factors that make each country different, Green says. The antiquated embassy-based model may not achieve that goal. Embassies are impediments to understanding local culture and costly to staff. Twenty-first-century overseas representation needs to be sharper and smarter—but diplomats need to get their mail delivered to the countries where they are stationed only when there is

sufficient value added. Could routine visa applications be moved offshore? Could experts fly in for meetings with local officials? Britain is already experimenting with “laptop diplomats,” and other nations are asking foreign service staff to cover more than one country.

The new U.S. embassy in Iraq is roughly the size of Vatican City, with desk space for 1,000 workers behind blast-resistant walls. Baghdad, to be sure, is a special case. But the world is full of unique challenges to American diplomacy. To be effective, Green writes, embassies need to be integrators, not bunkers, as they are today.

## ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

# The Long Tail Tale

**THE SOURCE:** Should You Invest in the Long Tail? by Anita Elberse, in *Harvard Business Review*, July–Aug. 2008.

*WIRED* EDITOR CHRIS ANDERSON made a big splash in 2004 with his article (later a book)

touting the revolutionary coming of the “long tail.” His thesis: that online companies such as Amazon and Rhapsody could cheaply market hard-to-find products such as offbeat song tracks or books, and the individual sales

from such niche products would stretch out in a “long tail” on a sales chart, eventually overtaking the high-volume sales of the bestsellers.

Anita Elberse, a professor at Harvard Business School, recently tested Anderson’s idea. Looking at Rhapsody music “plays” over a three-month span (more than 32 million transactions), she found that “the top 10 percent of titles accounted for 78 percent of all plays, and the