

from which each fresh step renders the difficulty of extraction immensely greater." In 1933 President Franklin D. Roosevelt promised to end the interventions.

After the Cold War, the United States launched another round of interventions, in Somalia, Haiti, and Kosovo. "In a now familiar pattern," Tierney writes, "Americans perceived every one of these missions as a failure."

Yet in the course of intervening in Somalia during 1992 and '93, the United States saved probably around 100,000 lives, halved the number of refugees, and repaired much of the infrastructure, at a cost of 43 American lives. Likewise, the U.S. force present in Haiti from 1994 to '96 reinstalled an elected government, mitigated suffering, halted the exodus of refugees, supervised elections, and trained police at a cost of four American lives. Even so, Somalia is considered a military disaster; Haiti, a failure.

The long newsreel of U.S. nation-building includes only one scene that the public applauds as successful—the reconstruction of Germany and Japan after World War II. The postwar exception to the quagmire axiom shows that Americans approve of nation-building only when the nation turns out looking a lot like the United States.

Vietnam appears to be a turning point in quagmire history. It evokes such negative memories that even oblique references skew polling results about nation-building. Responses were 15 percentage points more positive toward U.S. efforts in Somalia when the question contained no allusion to Vietnam than when it did. Most observers do not compare the

Americans today are inclined to seize a verdict of failure from the jaws of success.

results of recent nation-building efforts to the results in Vietnam, but, rather, look at basic information about a mission and "see failure analogous to Vietnam," Tierney says.

Rogue states, failed states, weapons of mass destruction, and terrorism are likely to require more nation-building in the future, according to Tierney, even as Americans today are inclined to seize a verdict of failure from the jaws of success. The best presidential strategy for the inevitable need to rebuild chaotic countries is to avoid grandiose claims, promote a long-term perspective, and fight back the tide of skepticism and disillusionment.

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

And by the Way . . .

THE SOURCE: "Morning in Latin America: The Chance for a New Beginning" by Jorge G. Castañeda, in *Foreign Affairs*, Sept.-Oct. 2008.

IT IS A RARE PRESIDENTIAL election that isn't billed as the most important in memory, but 2008 has a real claim to the title. The new president will face two ongoing wars, a flagging economy, huge federal deficits, high oil prices, and all the issues surrounding global warming. Meanwhile, four big challenges on the minds of our neighbors to the south barely make the list: Cuba, immigra-

tion, trade, and a handful of "swash-buckling" nations with hard-left presidents and easy access to Venezuelan oil money.

Jorge G. Castañeda, the former Mexican foreign minister who now teaches at New York University, says that whoever succeeds the deeply unpopular George W. Bush will enjoy a honeymoon that he can use to ease strained hemispheric affairs. Cuban relations will move toward normalization if America seizes the initiative by lifting its embargo and dropping restrictions on travel and remittances. Better Cuban deportment can come later—if Cuba really wants to be part of the international community, it will need to deal with the confiscated property claims of Miami émigrés and such. Immigration reform can be enacted along the lines of the measures recently defeated in Congress if a new, more popular president with a genuine mandate makes it an early priority. Trade pacts can be extended and improved with the addition of labor and environmental protections.

Perhaps most touchy will be dealing with Latin America's "two Lefts." There is a "modern, democratic, globalized, and market-friendly Left, found in Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, parts of Central America, and up to a point, Peru," Castañeda says. Then there is a hard Left—a "retrograde, populist, authoritarian, statist, and anti-American Left thriving in Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, and, to a lesser extent, in Argentina, Colombia, and Paraguay."

The soft-Left countries, Castañeda writes, are reluctant to stand up to the hard liners and don't try to export their models of democracy. But the

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 & 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 super-power 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 & 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