

The following is an excerpt from the whole system book:

GLOBAL SYSTEM CHANGE
A Whole System Approach To
Achieving Sustainability and Real Prosperity

*The **Governance** section below is included in Chapter Five of Global System Change. The **Global Peace and Human Rights Protection** section is in Chapter Nine.*

GOVERNANCE

Governance is a complex and frequently longer-term system change issue. Important aspects of governance include levels of governance, autonomy versus interdependence, democracy and a global bill of rights. This section discusses systemic problems and solutions related to these and other governance issues. As with other systemic changes suggested throughout this book, ideas presented here are intended to be suggestions for consideration by collaborative system change groups.

Levels of Governance

Governance involves the organization, management and control of human society. Organization can occur at many levels, including local, regional, state, national, international and global. The organization of human society or sub-elements of human society can be driven by rational, random or other processes. Current national structures and borders, for example, did not result from rational whole system assessments focused on segmenting humanity in ways that maximize global well-being over the long-term. Instead, they largely resulted from the flawed ideas and systems discussed earlier.

As discussed in the Well-Being of Society section, around the time of the agricultural revolution, some religious and other ideas encouraged the domination of nature and other people. These ideas, and societies based on them, began to replace or push aside the partnership-based ideas and systems of indigenous cultures that had worked for thousands of years. As discussed in the Property Rights section, various religious, economic and political rationalizations and justifications were given for the domination of nature and other people. These rationalizations often condoned and drove the various empires seen throughout human history.

Original empire building or imperialism frequently was driven by political or military means. More recently, newer forms of imperialism based on economic means have emerged. Imperialistic or dominating entities can take different forms, including governments or corporations. Multinational corporations can take on imperialistic roles driven largely by flawed systems that require them to grow forever. They sometimes become more powerful than governments. National governments often no longer are the primary driver of empire building, for example, through the taking of land. But governments play a key role in economic empire building, in part by enabling the ongoing growth and domination of corporations. As discussed in the Economic Growth and Well-Being of Society sections,

seeking never-ending economic growth in the finite Earth system is not rational or sustainable. It drives growing environmental, social and economic problems.

Emulating nature probably is the most important overarching system change action needed to achieve sustainability and real prosperity. This strategy applies in nearly all areas, including governance. The solutions to many complex human problems are obvious or implied in nature. In emulating the sustainable and nearly infinitely more sophisticated systems of nature, an important aspect related to governance is local control. In nature, there are no national borders. Nature mostly is organized into local, largely self-sustaining communities that usually are divided by geography or other aspects of nature. Like nature, a sustainable human society would focus much more on strengthening local communities and regions. People who live on the land largely should control it. They have the greatest incentive to preserve the land and surrounding environment.

This implies that over time, as humanity moves toward sustainability, control of many aspects of society would shift from the national to the regional or local levels. One benefit of this decentralization of governance is empowerment of citizens. Many people feel powerless in relation to their national government, even though citizens theoretically are the ultimate leaders in a democracy. When governance is shifted to the local level, everyone who wants to be involved can be. This empowers citizens by giving them influence and control of their destiny.

Sustainable systems would use rational, logical, whole system approaches to governance. The ideal level of governance depends on the task or issue being managed. For many governance issues, a predominantly regional or local focus would be most effective. As discussed in the Trade, Scale and Competitive Advantage section, measures of effectiveness should include all aspects of social well-being, not just economic growth or economies of scale.

For some activities, the ideal level of governance often would be international or global. These types of activities include global environmental protection, global security, protection of human rights, and possibly some research such as exploration of outer space.

As many activities are decentralized to the regional and local levels and some are centralized at the international and global levels, the power and activities of national governments will decline. The idea that the role of national governments would decline in a sustainable world should not be surprising. National borders and segmentations often resulted from illogical, unfair and abusive ideas, systems and practices. We recognize that enslavement, genocide, slaughter of enemies and other barbaric acts that sometimes contributed to the current system of national borders were wrong. But their legacy often remains (i.e. the borders largely remain in place). In some ways, it is as if criminals were allowed to keep the proceeds of their crimes. However, it is different in the sense that these harmful actions often resulted from leaders doing what they thought was best for their people or what religions encouraged them to do.

Addressing national borders is a complex issue. But national borders often are the fruit of unjust actions. Therefore, there is little reason to assume that existing borders would be considered logical in a sustainable human society over the long-term. This is not to suggest that national borders should be dismantled. The more likely scenario is that over time they will become less relevant as various activities are centralized or decentralized. However, over the short, medium and even long-term, some activities might remain best managed at the national level.

The European Union illustrates how some national issues might be addressed. National borders did not become irrelevant with the formation of the European Union. But they did become less relevant as activities that were most efficiently and effectively managed at the international level were centralized. However, the European Union is not a full model of sustainable governance because it was formed in part

to compete more effectively in a global economy that is unsustainable and flawed in many ways. Under sustainable governance systems, more activities probably would be decentralized than centralized.

Several factors discussed in the Trade, Scale and Competitive Advantage section come into play here. Some people probably will argue that decentralizing the economy and society in many ways would lower efficiency and economies of scale. However, these arguments would be myopic if they did not adequately consider the whole system and all aspects of social well-being. When all aspects are considered, such as job security, environmental protection and happiness, a more decentralized society, with greater centralization of a few key issues, probably will be the most efficient and effective.

Addressing or even discussing national borders can be difficult. National identity often is a large part of personal identity. Many people are proud of their countries, as they might be proud of their favorite sports teams. In a competitive world, being part of a team or country can provide protection, pride and a sense of community. The purpose here is not to suggest changing national borders. It has more to do with changing perceptions about national borders.

Strongly identifying with one country can make citizens less sympathetic to the needs of people in other countries. In reality, we are all part of one global community. Borders cannot be seen from outer space. They are the fruit of human ideas and actions. They are concepts and constructs. As we recognize the reality that all people are equal and deserve a good life, we will become more willing to shift governance of some issues, such as protection of human rights, to the global level. The relevant team is not the US, French, Chinese, Kenyan or Brazilian team. It is the human or global team.

Of course, if we are all on the same team, then there is no one left to compete with. But this is what humanity needs to do to survive and prosper. Sports competition is fun. But excessive competition in human society is suicidal. To illustrate, when considering the whole human body, it becomes clear that the overwhelming force in a healthy body is cooperation. When the overwhelming force is competition, the body probably has cancer or some other terminal illness. But if one looks at the cellular level, they sometimes would see one cell eating another cell and might conclude (incorrectly) that the overwhelming force in a healthy human body is competition.

In the same way, if someone walks into a forest and sees one animal eating another animal, they might conclude that the overwhelming force in nature is competition. But if we step back and look at the whole forest, or any other healthy natural system, nearly infinite symmetry and coordination show that the overwhelming force in nature is cooperation.

When humans did not have the technology and power to substantially alter nature, we probably could have survived if human society was predominantly competitive. Paradoxically, at a time when we could have gotten away with competition, many indigenous societies recognized that cooperation with nature and others was the wiser, better course. Now that we have gained the power and technology to substantially alter our life support systems, greater cooperation among humanity has become essential for prosperity and even survival.

Our power has grown faster than our wisdom. In a sense, our wisdom has declined because we once often implicitly recognized that cooperation was the better way. But we seem to have forgotten this. Many people understand that cooperation is wise and live their lives based on this idea. But many national and global economic and political systems are based on competition. These systems drive most of the environmental and social degradation seen around the world. The problem is not so much individuals as myopic, flawed systems.

As seen in nature, limited competition at the individual level can work. But at the whole system level, survival and prosperity require cooperation. We have scaled ideas and systems based on competition up to the higher system level. This must change. Our higher-level economic and political systems must be based largely on cooperation. We have grown too large and powerful to afford the luxury of competition. Cooperation at the overarching system level is mandatory if we wish to avoid system collapse.

It is imperative that our wisdom and cooperation accelerate rapidly and catch up with our power. From a survival perspective, the only relevant team is the human team. Beyond survival the only constant in nature is diversity. As we move toward real prosperity, the great diversity of human ethnicity, culture, tradition and language should be honored and protected. As much as anything else, our diversity makes humanity beautiful.

Autonomy versus Interdependence

Autonomy versus interdependence relates to the degree of separation or independence within human society. Largely using the US as an example, this subsection discusses why some nations might believe that autonomy is important, how autonomy is maintained, and why less autonomy and more interdependence would produce a more sustainable and prosperous human society.

In reality, we all are part of one interconnected system. None of us can live in outer space. But the shortsighted human perspective often makes our interconnectedness difficult to see. Nevertheless, interconnectedness is reality. Separation is an illusion. As the human economy and society expand, if we continue to live largely as autonomous, separate entities, our problems will increase. Sooner or later (probably sooner), we will be compelled to address the reality of our interconnectedness and interdependence. Doing this in a rational and voluntary way will ease the transition to sustainability and maximize the well-being of human society.

One of the main barriers to sustainable governance is the desire to be autonomous at the national level. In a competitive and dominating world with frequent wars and many threats such as terrorism, strong and largely autonomous nations enable protection of citizens, economic interests and national security.

In this fear-based world, protection of national security often is used to override other concerns. For example, the military and corporations supplying the military sometimes are exempt from environmental performance standards. But the foundation of national security is an environment that is clean enough to keep us alive. Therefore, degrading our life support systems in the interests of national security frequently is not logical.

Large corporations support strong nations. They facilitate the development of weapons and control of resources domestically and abroad. Under our flawed systems, corporations can die or be taken over if they do not maintain ever-increasing profits. Corporations are critical to national security in countries such as the US. As a result, there often is strong pressure to ensure that corporate and economic growth are not impeded. But we pay a high price for pursuing infinite growth in a finite system. It causes many environmental, social and economic problems. A whole system perspective shows that we are implementing a philosophy and strategy that could be defined as, “We must kill ourselves to protect ourselves”. Obviously, no one intends this. Our well-intentioned, but suicidal actions result from failing to think from a whole system perspective.

Regarding autonomy, the US is a special case among nations. With GDP of about \$18 trillion in 2015, the US represents about 22 percent of the global economy. But as noted, the US spends more than the rest of the world combined on military. The 2008 US military budget of \$623 billion represents more than 55

percent of global military expenditures (about \$1.1 trillion).¹ In terms of tonnage, the US Navy is larger than the 17 next largest navies combined.²

However, the roughly \$600 billion military budget substantially understates total US military expenditures. When Homeland security, Veterans Affairs, interest on the military portion of the national debt and other military-related expenditures are included, the total US military budget in 2016 was about \$1 trillion.³

A strong US military has played a critical role in recent world history. For example, it is difficult to imagine the horrors that might have been unleashed upon the world if the US had not been involved in World War II. A strong US military in partnership with our allies helps to keep global peace. It also protects the activities and expansion of US corporations around the world.

When economic growth is the primary focus of measurement and management, there is strong pressure to do whatever is needed to achieve economic growth, including sustaining a large military to protect US corporate expansion. But the US pays a high price for this. Nearly all advanced democracies provide strong social safety nets, usually including universal healthcare, guaranteed retirement security, affordable college and daycare for working parents.

But the extremely high level of corporate welfare in the US makes it difficult to provide basic services that are taken for granted in most other developed countries. Very high military expenditures also make it difficult to provide basic services and maximize the well-being of society. It is not logical to assume that the US must spend more than the rest of the world combined on the military to defend itself well. But national defense is not the only reason for high military expenditures. Other reasons apparently include protecting the ability of US corporations to expand overseas and protecting access to resources, such as oil.

There also is a psychological aspect of having a large military. In a world based on competition and domination, having the largest military often is very appealing (to those who have it). This type of thinking reflects the abundance of power and lack of wisdom in human society.

Military expenditures show the importance of switching the focus of measurement from economic growth to social well-being. The small group that owns most business assets in the US does not need affordable college, universal healthcare or secure retirement. But they often do need a large military to support the expansion of US corporations overseas. This group gives the most money to politicians. As a result, they usually get what they want.

Average citizens were not asked if they would like to sacrifice basic services so that they could have the largest military in the world by nearly a factor of ten. This choice was imposed on them. The US spends nearly ten times more than the second largest military power in the world, China (\$70 billion 2009 military budget).⁴ The US could cut military expenditures in half and still be more than four times larger than the next largest military. If our military cannot defend the US well when it is more than four times larger than any other military, then we have an inferior and extremely inefficient military strategy. Cutting military expenditures in a way that still allows us to remain the world's largest and most powerful military by far would help the US to care for its citizens at levels comparable to other advanced democracies.

The desire to remain autonomous is a main barrier to reducing US military expenditures. The US began as a revolution against tyranny and unfairness. We fought for and won our independence. We established a visionary form of government that has been a model and inspiration for many other countries. We have

defended democracy, human rights and economic opportunity around the world. In other words, we meant well and did well in many ways.

The US grew up, so to speak, in a competitive and often unsafe world. The ability to do what we believed was right when necessary was critical to our success. In other words, autonomy was key to our success. But as with individuals, the growth and maturation of countries continue. Ways that once were appropriate and effective can become inappropriate and ineffective. As the human economy and society continues to expand in the finite Earth system, the reality of our interconnectedness and interdependence becomes more obvious. Autonomy once was an asset. But it has become a liability in many ways.

It is difficult to say why the US appears to believe that our military must be vastly larger than any other. Perhaps some senior government and military leaders believe that the world would be too unsafe and dangerous if we did not dominate the world militarily. From this perspective, it appears that some US leaders essentially view the US as the world's parent and all other countries as a collection of good and bad children who must be kept in line. These types of arrogant, paternalistic attitudes must change. This approach can alienate us from the rest of the world. Paradoxically, our strategy of dominating the world militarily might make us less safe because it can turn other countries against us.

The US cannot afford to continue being the world's policeman or using the implied threat of military force to impose our will and ways upon the world. Extensive global military operations are a main cause of high US military expenditures. The US maintains about 850 military facilities in more than 40 countries and US territories.⁵ These operations cost about \$250 billion per year. Maintaining global military dominance is too costly. It often forces us to sacrifice basic services that are provided in other countries.

The maturation process for countries and individuals is similar. At first, children depend on their parents (as the US did on England). Then teenagers begin to break away and become independent, sometimes by rebelling against parents (as the US did against England). But as individuals mature into their 20s and 30s, they often realize that no person is an island. Survival, prosperity and happiness often require reliance on others, including families, friends, employers and communities.

It is the same with countries. We live in an increasingly interconnected global economy and society. Our survival and prosperity is best provided by interdependence, not autonomy. Becoming a mature participant in global society means that we do not seek to dominate world events and organizations. Instead, we compromise and sometimes do not get what we want.

This means that we rely in large part on others for our security and prosperity. We no longer need to go it alone, like teenagers rebelling against their parents. We no longer need to be stronger than the rest of the world combined. An interconnected world of democratic nations is fully capable of defending itself against terrorism and other threats to humanity. Our allies can protect our interests in their part of the world, as we protect theirs in ours.

The US already practices interdependence in many ways, for example, through our participation in the United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization and many other international organizations. Nevertheless, in spite of these partnerships, it still appears that we feel compelled to dominate in global economic, military and other areas. True interdependence involves not needing to dominate or be the leader. It includes being comfortable as an equal among equals.

This movement from autonomy to interdependence is a major component of balancing power and wisdom. The overwhelming force in nature is cooperation. It has worked in nature for billions of years and in indigenous societies for thousands of years. Cooperation is wise because it works. Increasing

interdependence and cooperation will provide many benefits. By assuming a more equal global military role, the US can better meet the needs of its citizens.

Paradoxically, scaling back military expenditures and becoming a better global citizen might be the best way to defend against a main threat to US security – terrorism. As discussed in Chapter One and the Taxes section, the US strategy for protecting against terrorism largely is focused on the supply-side. Through increased national security and global military operations, we seek to reduce the amount or supply of terrorist activity.

However, the war on terrorism cannot be won by focusing only on the supply-side. Terrorism is a faceless enemy. Nearly anyone could be a potential terrorist. It is impossible to police everyone. As a result, terrorism risk never can be reduced to near zero through supply-side efforts alone. Demand-side efforts are essential for providing strong protection against terrorism. These efforts involve lowering the demand for terrorism. The focus is on reducing or eliminating the actions and policies that make people angry at the US, want to harm us, and want to engage in terrorism against us.

One factor stimulating terrorist activity is the presence of the US military in other countries. In this sense, increasing our supply-side efforts against terrorism can increase the demand for terrorism. This can put us in an escalating, no-win situation. The harder we try to stop terrorism through military efforts, the more terrorism or demand for terrorism that we often create.

The US does much good in the world. But we also directly or indirectly impose far greater negative environmental and social impacts on global society than any other country. Reducing these impacts and lowering our military presence around the world probably would substantially lower the demand for terrorism against the US.

In addition to benefiting ourselves, the US will benefit the world by moving from autonomy to interdependence. The US is a global leader. If we model greater trust and reliance on others, many other countries probably also will move in this direction. Some might argue that this laying down of the sword, so to speak, is naïve and cowardly. But this is the perspective of an unwise, fearful bully. The purpose of scaling back military operations and relying more on alliances is not to lower security. It is to improve it. Obviously, these actions must not be done in a foolish or risky manner. They must be well thought-out and well executed.

From a practical perspective, the need to achieve never-ending economic growth might be the main barrier to moving from autonomy to interdependence. Myopic economic theories say that society will decline if economic growth ends. But reality and the more accurate whole system perspective show that society will decline and then end if economic growth does not stop.

Using economic growth as the primary measure of the well-being of society is relatively simple. But it is extremely myopic and destructive. Accurately measuring and managing social well-being is much more complex, in part because many direct indicators are measured instead of one indirect indicator. Wisdom includes being able to see the big picture. As we become wiser, we will directly measure social well-being (instead of simply and incorrectly assuming that it goes up as the economy grows).

This will greatly facilitate movement from autonomy to interdependence. The priority no longer will be that big companies grow forever or that we remain the global economic and military leader. The priority instead will be to maximize the well-being of the US and its citizens while working with other countries to maximize the well-being of their citizens.

In its relatively short history, the US has been a global leader in many ways. We now have the opportunity to model and lead perhaps the most important and essential transition in human history – the movement from ideas and practices based on domination and competition to ones based on cooperation. In effect, this is becoming wise on a national level while supporting the expansion of wisdom and cooperation on a global scale.

Democracy

As discussed in the Influencing Government section, democracy probably is the only sustainable form of government, in part because it is based on the innate equality of all people. The purpose of government should be to serve society and all citizens equally. This only can be achieved if all citizens have equal influence over government. If citizens do not have equal influence and access to government, for example through fair elections and lobbying procedures, then democracy is thwarted and citizens' rights are violated. This section discusses how democracy often is blocked and how it can be strengthened.

True democracy, in the sense of citizens having equal influence over and access to government, is rare in modern society. The reasons for lack of democracy in supposedly democratic nations vary by country. But there are some common themes and reasons. One of the most important is the inherent conflict between democracy and attempting to achieve never-ending economic growth. Economic growth benefits society in several ways. But it also increasingly degrades the environment and society in many other ways. When economic growth is the primary factor being measured and managed, the negative impacts of economic growth on the environment and society often are not measured and managed adequately.

As shown by income growth disparities and many other examples given previously, economic growth mostly measures the well-being of the small group that owns most business assets. Governments often focus mainly on economic growth, partly because this group gives the most money to politicians and inappropriately influences government in other ways. In addition, many political leaders believe in the myopic and increasingly incorrect philosophy that economic growth is the best way to enhance the well-being of broader society.

If people had true equal influence over government (i.e. if true democracy were present), then government would be much more inclined to do what actually was best for broader society. In other words, government would be inclined to directly measure and manage what was best for all citizens, instead of what was best for wealthy business owners. Countries would be managed to maximize the ends (social well-being), rather than the means to the end (economic growth).

Maximizing social well-being sometimes would mean that economies would decline or not grow. The focus would be on factors such as job security, environmental protection and maximizing the well-being of individuals, families and communities. As shown in nature, this maximizing of well-being usually is achieved through balance, not growth.

Under current systems, maintaining economic and military dominance often requires ongoing economic growth. Without this, the multinational corporations that enable dominance might decline or go out of business. In a world based on competition and domination, impeding economic growth appears to be suboptimal. True democracy might slow, stop or reverse economic growth (by shifting the focus to social well-being). As a result, it often is not implemented.

Democracy is thwarted by different means in different countries. The US and China provide two important examples of the suppression of democracy. As discussed extensively, democracy is suppressed in the US mainly through inappropriate influence of government and unfair election practices. In addition,

failing to disclose military activities can inhibit democracy by taking away the people's ability to make decisions about or be aware of critical issues.

For example, under the banner of national security, the US military engages in many practices that are not disclosed to the public. Obviously, non-disclosure is logical and important in many cases. Revealing military strategies to potential enemies (through public disclosure) often would greatly weaken effectiveness. However, some military activities have existing or potential negative environmental, social and/or economic impacts. Most secret military activities are reviewed by the legislative, executive and sometimes judicial branches of government. However, a small group of political leaders reviewing this information might not adequately protect the public.

To illustrate, for many years, the US military has directed large amounts of energy at the upper atmosphere through the High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program (HAARP). Some experts believe that HAARP and other facilities like it around the world have the potential to significantly alter weather patterns.⁶ Weather disruptions could be used as a weapon, for example, by causing floods or droughts in enemy countries. The US military denies that this is the purpose of HAARP. Instead, it discusses other uses of the technology.

Even if weather disruption were one purpose of HAARP, the military might be inclined to deny it. Admitting this could compel enemies to develop similar weapons, limit HAARP's effectiveness, and/or make the technology politically unfeasible. If weather manipulation is not a purpose of HAARP, the technology potentially could have unintended negative impacts on weather. This in turn could cause negative environmental, social and economic impacts.

Balancing national military security with more important types of national security, such as environmental protection, is a difficult system change issue. Obviously national military security must be protected. But the foundation of national security is environmental protection. Without an environment that is clean enough to keep us alive, there is no nation to protect.

Activities such as HAARP that have the potential to cause large environmental and other problems sometimes should not be kept secret from the public. The interconnected global environment is massively complex. Humans do not come close to understanding how it functions as one total system. Weather manipulations (intentional or unintentional) could have large, unforeseen negative consequences. HAARP, nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, and other weapons technologies could have major negative impacts on human society, or even destroy it. As a result, the use of these technologies probably is not a decision that should be made by a few people who might be narrowly focused on military security and not adequately considering other aspects of national security, including the most important – environmental protection.

In cases where the potential collateral risks of weapons development and use are great, citizens have a right to know what is being contemplated. Obviously, public disclosure would render many weapons systems untenable. But the people's right to survive and be aware of grave risks facing them takes priority over weapons development. Requiring disclosure of weapons systems with high collateral risks will compel the military to develop weapons that provide excellent military protection without compromising other critical aspects of national security, such as environmental protection or the survival of human society.

The same situation exists with business. When businesses are held fully responsible for negative impacts, acting responsibly becomes the profit-maximizing strategy. The profit motive compels companies to develop high quality, cost effective products and services that do not degrade the environment and society. When the military is held fully responsible or accountable for negative impacts, it also is

compelled to creatively provide outstanding military protection in ways that do not degrade the environment or society.

Obviously, this is not a black and white issue. There might be situations where environmental or social risks are necessary, for example, to adequately defend against weapons being developed by potential enemies. However, national security probably is used too often to dismiss or ignore environmental, social and economic concerns. If the military is held to a higher standard, it will figure out how to meet this standard while continuing to ensure excellent national military security.

In the US, failing to disclose military activities that threaten the well-being of humanity is a relatively small suppression of democracy compared to the issues discussed in the Influencing Government and Government and Elections sections. Implementing the suggestions in these sections will greatly enhance democracy in the US.

In China, democracy also is suppressed, but largely through different mechanisms. China is a communist country. In theory, communism is a democratic form of government. Every member of society theoretically is allowed to participate in economic and political decision making.⁷ However, in practice, communist countries often are controlled by small groups of people and citizens' rights are regularly violated.

In China, citizens directly elect politicians at the local level. Then these politicians elect politicians above them. This system of politicians electing other politicians continues up through several levels of government until the highest level is reached (the President and the National People's Congress). These indirect elections suppress democracy in several ways. For example, citizens electing a politician who then elects another politician is not the same as citizens electing both politicians. Politicians have biases and self-interests. In addition, politicians cannot know which other politicians the people would like to elect unless another election is held to gather this information. As a result, politicians must guess what the people want. This guesswork combined with bias and self-interest virtually guarantees that the will of the people will not be achieved when politicians elect other politicians through indirect elections.

Also, essentially all senior government officials in China are members of the Communist Party. Other political parties are allowed in China. But they all essentially are under the control of the Communist Party.⁸ This effectively means that one party dominates China's government. Citizens might vote for candidates in other political parties. But these candidates and parties have little chance of being elected at the national level. This inability of other parties to attain power means that the will of the people cannot be achieved at the highest, most important level of government.

With indirect elections, politicians below elect politicians above. However, since one party controls government, politicians below usually take directions from politicians above. This can put pressure on politicians below to vote as directed by politicians above. This further lowers the probability that the will of the people will penetrate up through several levels of government dominated by one party.

The US political system is dominated by two parties, the Democrats and the Republicans. When one party takes over the executive or legislative branch, the other party is dissatisfied. But the country moves forward. It has for over 200 years. The same would be true in China. If the will of the people were reflected in government, all parties and candidates would have an equal and fair chance to attain office at any level of government. Under current systems, a small group in the Communist Party decides what is best for the people. This is not a people's republic. The People's Republic of China only can become an actual people's republic by allowing the people to directly elect politicians at all levels of government can.

The two-party system in the US creates many of the same problems as the one party system in China. As discussed in the Government and Elections section, US political systems make it difficult for third parties to have an influence in the US. The two-party system implies that US citizens have choices. In some ways this is true. Democratic and Republican candidates and parties often take different positions on major issues. However, candidates from both parties usually accept large amounts of money from large companies and their wealthy owners. This makes politicians from both parties beholden to these groups. As a result, regardless of which party wins, a small group of wealthy citizens still largely controls government.

This book does not emphasize distinctions between Democratic and Republican parties or politicians. Focusing on differences between the parties foments debate and keeps the status quo locked in place. The main problems or enemies in the US are flawed systems that frequently compel well-intentioned politicians from both parties to take actions that help their wealthy benefactors, but degrade society. Politicians from both parties perpetuate extensive corporate welfare. As discussed in the Finance and Capital Markets section, trillions of taxpayer dollars were used to bailout bank owners and other wealthy speculators. These large, unfair wealth transfers occurred under Republican and Democratic administrations.

The US and China are very similar in the sense that small groups of people control government. The two-party system in the US creates the illusion that the people control government. The indirect election system in China also creates the illusion that the people are in charge. In some ways, this is true. Citizens in both countries have some influence. However, this influence is limited. The small group that owns most business assets in the US is like the small group of leaders that control the Communist Party in China. Most power resides with these small groups. Neither country will be a true democracy until this changes.

The Chinese government has driven strong economic growth, built China into a global super power and implemented some of the most aggressive environmental protection programs in the world. Chinese leaders appear to be managing many aspects their country well. But there is no guarantee that future leaders will be as successful or serve the people as well. A small group of leaders in the Communist Party cannot fully know the minds and will of the people. The only way to guarantee that the people's will is achieved in government is to allow the people to choose their political candidates and parties, as well as directly elect their leaders at all levels of government. As noted, the wise King of Bhutan recognized the potential problems and abuses of power that might result from a government that was not controlled and replaceable by the people. As a result, he voluntarily converted his country to a democracy.

It is difficult to say why the people are not allowed to directly elect their senior leaders in the People's Republic of China. Some citizens and leaders might believe that the people are not competent to rule themselves. This is partly true in all countries. As discussed in the Government and Elections section, the US Founders understood that direct democracy was an unworkable form of government. Average citizens usually do not have enough time to study complex issues and make well-informed decisions.

However, this does not mean that citizens are not or should not be the ultimate leaders of society. As the name the People's Republic of China implies, the purpose of government is to serve the people. The individual perspective makes humans inherently shortsighted. Therefore, it probably is impossible for leaders to fully understand and implement the will of the people if they are not directly accountable to and replaceable by the people. As noted, Chinese leaders often managed their country well. But as global environmental, social and economic problems increase, as they inevitably will if large system changes are not made, there is a risk that Chinese leaders who are not fully accountable to the people might respond in ways that do not serve the people's best interests.

While the mechanisms are different, the problem in China and the US essentially is the same – the people do not control government. Small groups of wealthy or powerful people control both governments. This concentration of power and lack of democracy facilitates the quest for economic and military superiority and dominance. But it is not sustainable. Both systems are inherently unfair. As a result, they almost certainly will change through voluntary or involuntary means.

The current US and Chinese governance systems implicitly (though perhaps not intentionally) are based on the idea that a small group of powerful leaders know the needs of the people better than the people themselves. These leaders often are experts. As a result, this might be true in some ways. But even experts can make mistakes in ascertaining what is best for the people. In the Soviet Union for example, communist leaders intended to do what was best for the people. But in spite of this, citizens' rights were regularly violated. The government lost sight of what was best for the people because it was not directly elected by and accountable to the people.

Any nation that is not controlled by the people will fail because it violates the natural laws of fairness and equality. Citizens did not control the Soviet Union. Largely as a result, it collapsed. The same applies to the US, China and any other country that is not controlled by the people. If the US does not move substantially toward the democratic principles upon which it was founded, it will collapse. If China does not move toward the democratic principles inherent in communist philosophy, it probably will collapse too.

Global Bill of Rights

One of the most important aspects of sustainable governance is implementing and strongly enforcing a global bill of rights. An International Bill of Human Rights already exists. It is comprised of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and two related covenants. But extensive human rights abuses around the world show that many countries do not abide by it.

Human rights abuses often occur in tyrannical or undemocratic governments. People are abused on every level, sometimes by their own governments. Basic rights and freedoms are regularly removed. Wealth sometimes is taken to an even greater degree than in the US. People often are forced to publicly praise or worship leaders who abuse them. If they do not, they or their families might be punished or killed. These violations of human rights are an abomination. Why would a man or woman worship a man who took away their dignity and freedom. (Reflecting lack of wisdom, tyrants and megalomaniacs usually are men.)

Every person on this planet is absolutely equal and entitled to the same level of protection, basic sustenance, dignity, respect and freedom. As a race, our failure to guarantee this protection to our fellow human beings probably is humanity's greatest failure and disgrace. It simply is not acceptable in modern society to allow widespread suffering and human rights abuses. We have the power to protect every person on this planet. We should be ashamed of ourselves for not using it. This would be wise use of power. Power used for domination and control usually is unwise and destructive. Protecting others is the proper use of power.

As discussed, under sustainable governance systems, many if not most aspects of society would be governed at the regional or local level. However, some aspects would be governed most logically and effectively at the global level. Ensuring global security and protecting human rights are among the most important actions in this category. By shifting some security responsibilities to the global level, each nation (especially the US) probably could lower military expenditures while receiving better protection and national security.

Protection of human rights probably also should be done by a global coalition ultimately including all nations. In theory, the UN could do this. But it has not been empowered to do so. Global power largely remains at the national level. The US and other nations often are unwilling to give up autonomy and power to a collective body. This kind of posturing and protection of self-interest has created many problems in the UN and greatly weakened its ability to fulfill the humanitarian and other purposes for which it was established.

We all are part of one interconnected and interdependent system. If we do not develop the wisdom needed to cooperate to a much greater degree, problems in human society will continue to increase. We are at or near the tipping point of many environmental, social and economic problems. If we do not become wiser and cooperate more, many of our major problems will quickly get worse.

In a civilized, humane, advanced and sustainable society, all global citizens would be protected. Leaders would not be allowed to abuse their people. Any leader who violates the rights of their citizens would be considered a criminal and removed from power by the collective global community. Tyrannical, abusive governments would be replaced by democratic governments that guarantee protection of human rights and are chosen by local people.

The US and other countries have been reluctant to establish such a system, in part because violating another country's autonomy implies that our autonomy might be violated. This is where maturity comes in. If we are treating our citizens well and not taking advantage of citizens in other countries, we do not have to worry about our autonomy being violated, in the same way that law-abiding citizens have no need to fear police in a just and fair democracy.

However, US companies often impose substantial negative environmental and social impacts around the world. Abiding by the rulings of a world court or other global body that required reduction of these impacts might restrict the profits of US companies, and thereby limit US economic growth. Economic growth and corporate profitability are the primary factors being measured and managed. As a result, actions that might inhibit economic growth, such as abiding by the higher authority of the global community, frequently are resisted.

It is possible that rulings of a global authority might unfairly benefit some members rather than the entire global community. This is one reason why movement toward global governance in areas where it makes sense to do so could be difficult and complex. Governance systems must ensure fair participation and prevent inappropriate manipulation.

Removing leaders who are criminals against humanity should not be done unilaterally. The collective global community must do it. If one or more countries removed a leader for reasons that they considered to be legitimate, other countries might perceive that the actions were motivated primarily by self-interest, rather than seeking to do what is best for the global community. Unilateral action could cause resistance in the country whose leader is removed (even if the leader is abusive) as well as in other countries.

For example, the US invasions of Iraq after it invaded Kuwait and Afghanistan after it supported the September 11th attacks were widely supported by many countries because we clearly had legitimate reasons for the invasions. However, the second invasion of Iraq for the purpose of removing Saddam Hussein from power was not as widely supported. Many countries opposed it. The invasion was not the product of collective global action. As a result, it was costly for the US (over \$4 trillion) and ineffective in some ways. Many Iraqi citizens resented the US's largely unilateral action.

This shows why removing criminals against humanity must be done collectively. Saddam Hussein was an abomination as a leader. He abused and murdered many Iraqi citizens. In an enlightened global

community, an arrogant, probably insane megalomaniac like him would not be allowed to rule people. Removing Saddam Hussein from power benefited the citizens that he abused or might have abused. In addition, as discussed in the Privacy section, the US deceptively argued that Iraq was developing weapons of mass destruction. These factors might have appeared to justify the invasion. But the threat to the US was not immanent. Therefore, it probably would have been better to work more with allies on a coordinated removal of Saddam Hussein, rather than acting in a nearly unilateral manner.

One problem with establishing a global system for removing abusive leaders from power is that developed countries usually impose far greater negative impacts on global society than tyrannical leaders who abuse their citizens. To illustrate, the US is by far the most unsustainable country in the world. As the largest national economy, demand for products and services in the US drives more global pollution, waste, resource consumption and negative social impacts than any other country.

As discussed, US companies impose many negative environmental and social impacts around the world. This is not said as a criticism of US companies or leaders. Flawed systems create a situation where companies could not exist if they did not degrade the global environment and society. The US does much good around the world. But we also impose far more negative impacts than any other country. In this sense, we are the greatest criminal in the world.

But our crimes are different from the crimes of tyrannical leaders. We do not intend to hurt anyone. Our intention is to do the opposite – benefit humanity. Like many other countries and companies, we are an unintentional criminal. We mean well. But flawed systems often compel us to do bad. Our negative impacts are unintentional. Therefore, they should be dealt with differently from tyrannical, abusive leaders. Our impacts result from flawed systems, not flawed motives. The purpose of this book is to suggest how these flawed systems might be improved. System change strategies like those suggested here probably are the best way to address the negative impacts of the US and other well intentioned, but destructive countries.

Women's rights provide another example of a human rights issue that is complicated by good intentions. In some countries, women have far fewer rights than men. Women sometimes are considered to be the property of men, have little say in how their children are raised, cannot own property, must be completely covered when going outside, must be accompanied by a man when outside the home, and/or can be punished if they are victims of crimes such as rape. Girls growing up in cultures such as these often come to believe that this treatment of women is normal and correct. They sometimes think that women who believe that they are equal to men, and act that way, are acting inappropriately and might be punished by God for doing so.

This is similar to the situation with slavery. Children born into slavery sometimes came to believe that slavery was the normal and correct way of the world. This belief was strengthened by the fact that some religions supported slavery. If God says that slavery is correct, then it must be, they sometimes believed.

Poor treatment of women is a difficult issue. Tyrants or ill-intentioned leaders frequently are not the ones perpetuating unequal treatment of women. Instead, men who sincerely believe that they are doing the right thing often do so. They are doing what they believe God wants them to do. If they treat women this way, they will go to Heaven, they believe. If they do not, they might go to hell. Women who resist this treatment also might go to hell. These religious ideas can cause some men to believe that they are helping women by treating them like property.

Difficulty arises because these are not bad, ill-intentioned people. They often are highly moral and religious people who are trying to live good lives. Following their religious beliefs, they often treat other people kindly, including the women who are considered to be property. There probably are no easy

solutions to situations like this. If a country practiced slavery, the global community should not allow this to continue, even if people in the country believe that they are doing the right thing and following the will of God.

Applying this standard to women's rights is difficult. People should not impose their religious views and standards on others. We should not interfere with people's right to practice their religion. But religion should not be used to suppress and abuse people, as it was with slavery. At some point, the global community must intercede to protect our fellow human beings.

As discussed in the Well-Being of Society section, no loving God would tell its subjects to destroy themselves, for example, by placing humans above nature. Also, no loving God would tell one person to enslave another or say that some people, such as women, have fewer rights than others. These ideas violate the natural laws of equality and fairness. Therefore, the ideas that humans are above nature, slavery is acceptable or women are not equal to men all are misinterpretations of Divine inspiration or some other type of inspiration.

Once again, this shows the importance of moving beyond blind faith. As discussed throughout this book, blind faith in economic, religious and other ideas can be extremely destructive. Through the intuitive function, one hears that all people are equal and worthy of love, respect and protection. If they do not hear this, then their minds probably are interfering with the receipt of intuitive wisdom. For those who believe in God, blind faith is interfering with hearing God's will. Intuitive wisdom is based on the laws of nature. These laws include fairness and equality. If someone's inner wisdom tells them that unfair or unequal treatment of fellow humans is acceptable, then they are deluded. It is impossible for intuitive wisdom to violate the laws of nature because intuitive wisdom includes the wisdom of nature. This is why discernment is so important.

It is understandable that some men, perhaps the less holy or more deluded, would support religious or other ideas that treat women like property or slaves. This type of thinking sometimes enables men to treat women like animals. In societies where women are not considered to be equal to men, men sometimes beat women or abuse them in other ways without consequence. Throughout history, religious dogma has been used to condone and encourage some of the most horrible human behavior, such as slavery. In the same way that religious dogma that condones slavery is wrong, religious dogma that condones or encourages the unequal treatment of women also is wrong.

For people who believe in God, God ultimately is heard within. Religious dogma can place someone on the path to God. But ultimately, people only can hear the will of God within. A loving God never would say that women are unequal to men or have fewer rights than men. As noted, if someone believes that they are hearing this within, then they are being deluded or misled by their minds or blind faith. Greater discernment is needed to find the truth.

While there might be no easy solution to human rights abuses perpetuated in the name of religion, one activity that could help is more open dialogue. Within religions, there often are varying interpretations of major issues. Within Christianity, for example, there are varying interpretations of God's will on the issues of abortion and same-sex marriage. Within Islam, there are varying interpretations about the rights and treatment of women. People should be given the option to hear alternative views, and then make their own decisions. Women have the right to choose to remain subordinate to men for religious or other reasons. But they should be given the right to choose this lifestyle rather than have it forced upon them.

Forcing women to be subordinate to men is a form of slavery. As humanity became more enlightened, we replaced destructive religious ideas, such as support for slavery, with civilized, enlightened ones. This enlightenment caused us to end slavery and other unfair practices. In a civilized, enlightened world, we

cannot and must not tolerate the unequal, abusive treatment of some of our fellow human beings. This natural right to equality takes priority over everything else, including religious dogma and national sovereignty. Religious dogma or national laws that support unequal treatment of women are voided by the higher laws of reality and nature.

Over time, as it becomes clear that people's rights are being violated, religious interpretations and cultural ideas that treat some people unfairly must give way to the absolutes of natural law. Anything that violates the laws of nature, such as fairness and equality, will not last. As discussed, we do not have the option of continuing to live on this planet as we are now. We are violating the laws of nature in many ways. Nature absolutely will correct us. It will be far less disruptive and much more beneficial if we choose to make these changes voluntarily.

Addressing global governance is a complex, longer-term system change issue. This section is presented near the end of this chapter because the suggestions made here probably would be considered over the longer-term. Suggestions made in previous sections often are more practical and actionable in the short to mid-term.

However, enforcing a global bill of rights must be done quickly. Abusive leaders are causing millions of our fellow human beings to suffer greatly. This must not be allowed any longer. Systems for removing criminal leaders from power and enforcing a global bill of rights must be implemented as quickly as possible.

GLOBAL PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION

Ensuring global peace and protecting the natural rights of every human being on this planet is an essential aspect of achieving sustainability and real prosperity. It is one of the most important components after protecting life support systems. Thomas Jefferson spoke of the natural rights of humans in the Declaration of Independence. He did not mean that only people in the United States have natural rights. Every human on this planet has the same innate, natural rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

But the natural rights of millions of people are being grossly violated in several parts of the world. In North Korea, for example, if citizens criticize the government, their whole families often are sent to labor camps where they are tortured, starved, worked to death and sometimes forced to dig their own graves.⁹ This abuse of people in totalitarian countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and other regions is perhaps the greatest disgrace of modern society. How can we allow our fellow human beings to be treated like this? It is like hearing people in the house next door violently abusing their children and doing nothing about it. No human being has a right to take freedom and rights from another human. We all are absolutely equal and worthy of having our basic, natural rights protected. In this sense, the country that a person resides in is completely irrelevant. It has zero impact on each person's innate, natural rights.

In the 1940s, following World War II, there was a strong movement in the US to establish a global government with limited powers for the purpose of ensuring global peace. Over half of state legislatures passed resolutions advocating the establishment of "a limited world federal government able to prevent war."¹⁰ More than 100 US senators and representatives proposed transforming the United Nations into a world Republic. House Concurrent Resolution 64 stated, "it should be a fundamental objective of the foreign policy of the United States to support and strengthen the United Nations and to seek its development into a world federation, open to all nations, with defined and limited powers adequate to

preserve peace and prevent aggression through the enactment, interpretation, and enforcement of world law."¹¹

An excellent article by Harris Wofford and Tad Daley, called *50 Years Later, JFK's Vision of Enduring World Peace Eclipsed by Focus on Assassination*, describes the global peace movement in the 1940s and President Kennedy's efforts to promote global peace.¹² The article explains that during World War II, there was a growing conviction that anarchy and war could not be permitted on a global level. The rule of law that prevailed within nations also should be enforced among nations. Development of the atomic bomb made the need for global peace even greater because war now put the survival of humanity at risk. Many leaders and prominent citizens in the 1940s and 1950s supported the abolition of war and establishment of a world republic to ensure global peace.

Albert Einstein said, "The world's present system of sovereign nations can lead only to barbarism, war and inhumanity. There is no salvation for civilization, or even the human race, other than the creation of a world government." In 1950, Winston Churchill stated, "Unless some effective world super-Government can be set up and brought quickly into action, the prospects for peace and human progress are dark and doubtful."¹³

General Dwight D. Eisenhower led the Allied D-Day invasion of Normandy in 1944, and later became President of the United States. He visited Normandy 20 years after D-Day. Speaking over the graves of young soldiers who gave their lives at Normandy, former President Eisenhower said, "These boys were cut off in their prime... They never knew the great experiences of going through life... I devoutly hope that we will never again see such things as these. I think, hope and pray that humanity has learned more than we had learned up to that time... We must find some way to... gain an eternal peace for this world."¹⁴

Having fought in World War II, Representative John F. Kennedy strongly supported the movement to establish a global government to ensure world peace in the 1940s. He continued to strongly advocate and work for global peace when he was elected President of the United States in 1960. President Kennedy said, "Too many of us think... that war is inevitable, that mankind is doomed, that we are gripped by forces we cannot control." But he said that we control our destiny. We are not the victims of uncontrollable forces.

President Kennedy said that world peace could be built "not on a sudden revolution in human nature but on a gradual evolution in human institutions... World peace, like community peace, does not require that each man love his neighbor. It requires only that they live together in mutual tolerance, submitting their disputes to a just and peaceful settlement."

Regarding the UN, President Kennedy said, "We seek to strengthen the United Nations... to develop it into a genuine world security system... This will require a new effort to achieve world law... Our primary long range interest... is general and complete disarmament... to build the new institutions of peace which would take the place of arms."

During his inaugural address, President Kennedy said, "The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life." He said that the goal of the UN should be "To enlarge the area in which its writ may run... and bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations." Our wise President said, "So let us begin anew... [and establish] a new endeavor, not a new balance of power, but a new world of law, where the strong are just and the weak secure and the peace preserved."¹⁵

Unfortunately, we did not learn the lesson of World War II and heed the advice of President Kennedy and many other wise leaders. As a result, the US and many other countries have suffered the immense cost and tragic lost lives of extensive wars. As President Kennedy said, war is not inevitable. We have the power to end it. We can remove the threat that nuclear and other weapons pose to human society. We also can protect the natural rights of every human being on this planet.

We have the power to do this. No excuse justifies not doing it. We should follow the wise advice given long ago by transforming the UN into an entity with the power to ensure global peace and protect human rights. As President Kennedy said, instead of fighting wars and killing each other, we should submit disputes to fair, impartial negotiation, arbitration and settlement.

We the People of the Earth also should work collectively through the UN to enforce a bill of rights for all humans. Every human has a right to self-government. Democracy should be established in every country. No leader anywhere has a right to suppress democracy and violate human rights. Protecting the natural rights of each human takes massive, essentially infinite priority over national sovereignty. When leaders anywhere on this planet violate citizens' natural rights, they lose their legitimacy and authority to rule. Acting as one global community, we must remove these abusive leaders from power, and then help the people of each region to establish fair, democratic government.

It is an absolute disgrace of humanity that people in North Korea, Sudan, Syria, Myanmar, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, and other abusive countries endure such horrible suffering, deprivation and natural rights violations. This outrage should not be allowed to stand for one more day. It is time to exercise the collective power of humanity to protect our brothers and sisters everywhere on this planet. This is the appropriate use of power. It is power guided by wisdom and love for our fellow human beings.

Much of the worst atrocities and human rights abuses occur in developing countries. To illustrate, in January 2015, 17 people were killed in terrorist attacks in France. World leaders and millions of citizens denounced the horror and demonstrated in France and other countries. In the same month, as many as 2,000 people were killed in one terrorist attack in Nigeria. In developed countries, we are justifiably outraged by any terrorist event. But it seems that far more people are killed far more frequently by terrorism in developing countries.

The life of a person in a developing country is worth just as much as the life of a person in a developed country. We as a global community should be working just as hard to stop terrorism and other atrocities in developing countries as we do in developed countries. The UN already seeks to minimize terror and harm in developing countries, for example, by sending peacekeeping forces. But the UN is limited by political and other barriers. A UN empowered by the global community could be far more effective at maintaining peace and ending atrocities around the world.

Some dogmatic Christians oppose the formation of a limited world government because the Biblical books of Revelation and Daniel supposedly oppose it. As discussed in the US Founders, Religious Dogma and Birth Control section, this is a perfect example of why religious dogma should have no impact on national or global governance. The book of Revelation apparently is a dream or vision, possibly by John the Apostle. It implies that Satan will establish a world government during the end times, prior to the second coming of Christ. This fantasy or nightmare has no more validity than a childhood fairy tale.

We must base our actions on rational thought, observations of reality and intuitive wisdom. Allowing religious dogma to interfere with establishing limited global government for the purpose of ensuring global peace and protecting human rights would be irrational and criminally immoral. In this case, religious dogma would be perpetuating the torture, abuse and murder of our fellow human beings. As

discussed extensively, religious dogma often is unintentionally harmful. It frequently causes people to violate religious principles and natural laws. The most important commandment of Christianity and virtually all other religions is to love, honor and respect each other. Allowing a religious fairy tale to perpetuate the murder and torture of fellow humans grossly violates the most important commandment of Christianity.

This is why it is absolutely essential that we place rational thought and intuitive wisdom above all else, as our Founders did long ago. As discussed in the Governance section, national boundaries were not developed based on fairness and sustainability principles. They largely evolved from ignorant ideas based on domination and separation. Rational thought should be used to organize human society. As noted, nature mostly is organized into local, largely self-sustaining communities. This strongly indicates that most aspects of human society probably should be decentralized and managed at local or regional levels.

However, rational thought and observations of reality show that some aspects of human society should be centralized and managed globally. These include mediating and ensuring global peace, protecting global environmental life support systems, and enforcing a global bill of rights. The US can and should play a major role in leading the establishment of a limited global government, probably through the UN, for these purposes.

In general, as a leading proponent of democracy (even though we fail to implement democracy in our own country) with the largest economy and military, the US should play a major role in leading and modeling sustainable behavior. Businesses and their allies often block sustainability actions that benefit humanity, but threaten shareholder returns, by arguing that we should not take actions, such as reducing pollution, until other countries do the same. This is a childish and ignorant position. If acting in an environmentally responsible manner threatens US jobs, we should impose tariffs on imports to protect jobs and life support systems.

As discussed in several sections, the US is pursuing an extremely irrational approach to terrorism. From September 11, 2001 to 2013, we spent over \$12 trillion on national security. Over this time period, about 300 US citizens worldwide were killed by terrorism. But about 36,000 US citizens were killed by foodborne illnesses. People in the US are 110 times more likely to die from foodborne illness than terrorism. But we spend far more on preventing terrorism than on preventing foodborne illnesses and other environmental and health problems that harm or kill many more people.¹⁶

As discussed in the Privacy section, most of the so-called terrorism enforcement of the Traitors Act is used to make drug arrests and monitor and suppress activists who oppose the unjust status quo. The US war on terror is focused mainly on the supply-side. We seek to suppress terrorism through military, police, surveillance and other actions. Extensive military actions around the world often increase the demand for terrorism by fomenting anger at the US. In addition, US companies impose extensive negative environmental, social and economic impacts in other countries. This further increases the demand for terrorism and puts US citizens at risk.

The focus on maximizing economic growth and shareholder returns compels the US government to support the expansion of US companies in other countries, in part through the maintenance of extensive overseas military operations. Being a world leader means acting responsibly. Instead of helping US businesses to grow forever, regardless of how much this degrades other countries, we should require that US companies act responsibly at home and abroad. The primary solution to terrorism is to focus on the demand-side. We should end the negative impacts of the US government and businesses around the world. Acting responsibly will build goodwill and probably protect us more than any supply-side action.

The US often has resisted strengthening the UN in part because we do not want anyone questioning our sovereignty. But this is a cowardly and childish position. Business-controlled government does not want to open itself to scrutiny and pressure to act responsibly. But the priority is not national sovereignty. It is doing the right thing for US citizens and all other people around the world. We are part of a global community. We also are a leader in this community. We should act like a mature leader.

If we are doing the right thing for people at home and around the world, we have nothing to fear from a more powerful global government. But we are not doing the right things in many ways. Rather than resisting changes that threaten shareholder returns, but benefit US citizens and people in other countries, we must be willing to change. When we oppose global mechanisms for ensuring peace and protecting human rights, we are perpetuating the abuse, torture and murder of fellow humans in totalitarian countries. Preventing the murder of citizens in North Korea or any other country takes priority over rich people getting richer in the US or anywhere else.

This country was established largely to protect the natural, basic rights of current and future human beings. Our Founders surely would have wanted us to use our great power to further this goal around the world. The most effective and probably only way to ensure global peace and enforce a global Bill of Rights is through some type of limited global government. The most practical and expedient way to achieve this, as President Kennedy and many other US leaders proposed after World War II, is to expand the power of the United Nations.

This might require that the US give up some of our power and autonomy. But we cannot continue to dominate the world with economic and military force. We must become a mature global citizen. In successful, sustainable communities, one member does not dominate the others. All community members are seen as equals. Those with more capabilities are expected to do more to help the community. This helps everyone to prosper and reach their fullest potential. The same is true in the global community. We should act as an equal member of the community. We should contribute our great strength to the community and help it to collectively achieve the goals of global peace and protection of human rights.

Thomas Jefferson said, "I hope that our wisdom will grow with our power, and teach us, that the less we use our power the greater it will be."¹⁷ Attempting to force our will on the world through military and economic power is wrong. It turns millions of people around the world against the US. It greatly increases the demand for terrorism and places US citizens at risk. The US has great power. But we apparently lack the wisdom to use it effectively. Our flawed, suicidal systems compel unwise actions, such as seeking infinite growth in a finite system.

We the People of the United States definitely have the collective wisdom needed to utilize the great power of our country in ways that benefit all people around the world, not just US citizens. To achieve this, we must work together, establish democracy in our country, and then direct our servant government to act as an equal partner (rather than polite tyrant) in the global community.

Regarding empowering the UN to remove abusive leaders by force, one might ask does this apply to the US? US politicians grossly abuse citizens by enabling wealthy campaign donors to essentially steal citizens' wealth and power. These business-controlled political puppets suppress democracy and remove the people's freedom. Should they be removed from power by force if they do not agree to quickly change their ways and implement democracy?

The situation in the US and other plutocracies is different from totalitarian regimes, such as North Korea. In totalitarian countries, people have no choice. They are forced to obey abusive rulers. Citizens frequently are tortured or abused if they fail to obey or worship maniacal dictators. They have no freedom. However in the US and other plutocracies, citizens do have choices and freedom. But they have

been misled into voluntarily giving up their freedom. Citizens often have been deceived into thinking that liberals or conservatives are degrading society. Their attention is turned away from those who actually are stealing their wealth and power.

In plutocracies, loss of freedom usually is voluntary. By allowing ourselves to be emotionally manipulated and misled, we voluntarily have given up our wealth, power and freedom. In totalitarian regimes, abusive leaders often would have to be removed by force if they did not quickly allow democracy in their countries. In other words, when citizens' rights and freedom are removed by force, abusive leaders might have to be removed by force. However, when rights and freedom are suppressed through deception (as occurs in the US), removing leaders by force generally would not be appropriate. The solution to deception is awareness raising, not force.

In plutocracies, leaders frequently are elected through deceptive practices. In the US, the two-party system misleads citizens into believing that democracy exists. But both parties are controlled by a small group of wealthy citizens. Therefore, regardless of which party wins, this small group wins. This is not democracy, in part because citizens usually do not have a voting option that promotes the well-being of all citizens. (Third parties focused on promoting the general welfare often have little or no chance of winning.)

In countries where democracy, freedom and natural rights have been suppressed through deception instead of force, force should not be used to remove abusive leaders. Unlike totalitarian regimes, plutocracies such as the US often have constitutions that require democracy. But business-influenced politicians are violating their constitutions. Rather than using force in these situations, it would be more effective to raise public awareness about lack of democracy and vested interest deceptions, and help citizens to understand how true democracy and freedom can be implemented. For example, a global group focused on protecting human rights, such as the UN, might help citizens in plutocracies to organize efforts that compel supposed public servants to abide by their constitutions, end corporate welfare and business control of government, establish true democracy, and use the public wealth to equally and fairly benefit all citizens.

Changing how we define and measure success is an essential component of ensuring peace, protecting human rights and maximizing the well-being of global society. Focusing on economic size and growth strongly drives environmental and social degradation. Instead of focusing on a means to an end (economic growth), we must emphasize the true goal or end point (the well-being of society). Economic growth, productivity, exports and imports ultimately are irrelevant. The success of countries should be judged solely on the extent to which they objectively maximize the long-term well-being of environmental life support systems and society.

National pride or the desire to be more powerful might compel countries to expand military forces or increase exports. As we redefine national and global success, this type of puffery no longer will be needed. National pride and success will be based on how well countries care for current and future citizens and cooperate in the global community of nations.

Guaranteeing true equality for women is one of the most important aspects of implementing a global bill of rights and achieving sustainability and real prosperity. As discussed in the Wisdom of Nature and Women's sections, women innately manifest greater cooperation, empathy, whole system thinking and other aspects of wisdom, in the same way that men innately manifest greater physical strength, aggressiveness, competitiveness and other aspects of power. Rapid environmental and social degradation throughout human society reflect our abundance of power and lack of wisdom. It also reflects the suppression of women. When we suppress those who innately manifest more wisdom, we suppress wisdom, and suffer severe negative consequences.

It probably is no coincidence that countries with the greatest suppression of women also frequently are the largest sources of global terrorism. Blind faith in religious dogma often compels severe suppression of women in countries where radical Islam is widely practiced. It also sometimes drives the killing of those with different spiritual views. Those who kill in the name of God claim to be doing the will of God. But they are completely cut off from God.

Rational thought and intuitive wisdom would reveal that no loving God would compel people to kill those who hold different views of God. Religious dogma that causes killing or abuse of others does not come from God or intuitive wisdom. These are ignorant ideas, created by fearful, myopic men and attributed to God. We all have access to the infinite wisdom of nature through the intuitive function. For those who believe in God, the actual, true word of God is heard within through the intuitive. Blind faith in ignorant, fearful religious dogma cuts people off from God. In other words, those who kill in the name of God are completely cut off from God because God or intuitive wisdom never would direct one human to kill or harm another, except in defense of self or others.

The overwhelming force in nature is cooperation, not competition. The primary commandment of essentially all major religions is to love, honor and respect other people. Those who truly are following the word of God or intuitive wisdom would act on this basis. As discussed in the Women's section, many studies show that women innately cooperate more readily and effectively. Greater empathy better enables women to look beyond their own individual needs and see the importance of cooperation in human society. Greater intuitive capacity better enables them to see through destructive religious dogma and perceive the actual word of God or intuitive wisdom.

Bringing women to a position of true equality with men and implementing a more balanced male-female leadership structure would increase wisdom, cooperation, compassion and sustainability in society. As a result, promoting women's rights in countries that contain large terrorist networks is one of the most important actions needed to end terrorism.

Lack of wisdom is most evident in countries that grossly suppress women and promote terrorism. But wisdom is lacking throughout the world, as shown by rapid environmental and social degradation in developed and developing countries. The most important requirement for achieving sustainability and real prosperity is increasing wisdom in human society. All men and women have access to essentially infinite wisdom through the intuitive. But women innately have greater access to wisdom. Therefore, in this sense, one of the most important actions needed to achieve sustainability real prosperity is to end the suppression of women and bring them to a position of true equality with men. Implementing a global Bill of Rights is a critical component of achieving this equality.

Modern human society is dominated by irrational, fear-based, competitive ideas and systems, as proven by the results we are achieving. A whole system perspective shows the destructive nature of competition and essential need for vastly greater cooperation in human society. Women see the big picture and understand the need for cooperation more readily. Elevating woman to a position of equality with men will increase wisdom in society. Balancing power with wisdom and men with women is essential for achieving global peace.

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