But there is one process that will have to be repeated, and in almost exactly the same manner. The Army and Marine Corps came out of the Vietnam War with thoughtful and well-defined counterinsurgency doctrines and tactics that were actually completely useless. Over the next several years, they were able to move beyond those doctrines and reconstitute themselves as effective fighting forces. They will have to do so again after the Iraq war.

After Vietnam, nearly all of the tactical manuals were scrapped, not just the counterinsurgency nonsense but the pre-Vietnam manuals that assumed the prompt and liberal use of nuclear weapons. The Army turned its attention from Vietnam to the Soviet army in Europe. It developed an entirely new maneuver doctrine to resist the mass of armored forces that was poised against the West German border, with an emphasis on agile operations and high-quality firepower. The best and brightest were wonderfully distracted from the Vietnam shambles as they refocused on the challenge of confronting a growing Soviet army.

There is no such straightforward challenge today, but the task ahead is clear nonetheless. If military occupations are certain losers, what can the military do to stop terrorism? In fact, there are times when detectable terrorist “infrastructures” begin to emerge, as happened in Afghanistan before 2001, when Al Qaeda acquired training bases and supply stores that were identified and that could have been, and should have been, raided and destroyed. Attacking such targets with cruise missiles, as Bill Clinton did in 1998, is very tempting for presidents and military chiefs alike because it eliminates the risk of casualties. But such attacks achieve little. It takes boots on the ground to encircle a terrorist camp, kill or capture its denizens, and thoroughly search buildings and caves to remove or destroy equipment and supplies. These would be swift and agile operations, for in raids the advantage of surprise is invariably worth more than massed strength laboriously assembled and deployed. Some raids might be very small, requiring only a handful of troops and lasting only a few hours. Others might be major expeditions that could last for a week—but still with no lingering aftermath, no occupation that would start the usual cycle of insurgency and repression. That is the proper new focus for the Army and Marine Corps.

This major transformation in strategic vision will require an equally major transformation in force structure. Having shifted to maneuver warfare in the 1980s, the combat formations of the Army and Marine Corps must now evolve one step further to become commando forces writ large. Such a transformation would bring great savings in itself, because today’s excessively costly “Special Operations Forces”—which, though once truly specialized, now amount to an outsized fifth service, with air, naval, and ground elements—could be reabsorbed into the regular service structures. To return to a structure in which the Special Forces really are specialized would release much funding for the new and more agile Army and Marine Corps we will need, once our troops are finally disengaged from their futile role as Mesopotamian constables.

10. DIPLOMACY
BY ANNE-MARIE SLAUGHTER

On a rainy day in 1945, soon after U.S. troops had entered the German concentration camp at Dachau, the American commanding officer mounted a stage. He delivered a short speech of friendship, at the close of which an American color guard bore the Stars and Stripes toward the podium. For a moment it looked as if the troops would mount the platform and plant the American flag high above the assembled prisoners.

But at the last moment, upon the colonel’s signal, they wheeled toward the assembled thousands, carried our banners borne by men in convict stripes from a dozen victim peoples. And at this there arose a shout—a general shout of brotherhood and joy that echoed around the sodden walls.

That scene comes from The March of Freedom: A Layman’s History of the American People, by William Harlan Hale, a broadcaster for the Voice of America. Writing in 1947, Hale described a world in which the United States—the greatest military and economic power and the unchallenged victor of World War II—was in danger of being seen as arrogant and imperialist. Americans,
however, saw themselves very differently, as standing up for what was right and promoting universal values.

Does this sound familiar? The paradox of American foreign policy today is that the United States, though more powerful than ever, has rarely been so lost in the world and never more reviled. Majorities of Turks, Moroccans, Jordanians, and Pakistanis believe the entire U.S. campaign against Islamic terrorism is in fact meant to secure oil or even to achieve world domination. Further, majorities in all those countries, as well as in France, Germany, and Russia, say that the Iraq war has made them less confident that the United States wants to promote liberty or democracy abroad.

It did not have to be this way. As I have watched Rudy Giuliani's poll numbers rise, I've wondered whether Americans are not actually nostalgic for the world immediately after the attacks of September 11, 2001, when not only Americans but the world rallied around our country in acute awareness of a common humanity. Remember, citizens from over ninety nations lost their lives in the attacks. The United Nations passed a unanimous resolution supporting the United States, and ordinary citizens emailed and called American friends to express their sorrow and solidarity.

In short, everyone was with us—until we told them, both in word and in deed, that if they weren't with us they were against us. The Bush Administration announced we had nothing to negotiate with terrorists or for international institutions, instead preferring a "coalition of the willing," insisted we had evidence of an Iraqi nuclear-weapons program when such evidence did not, in fact, exist; sought a second U.N. resolution authorizing the invasion of Iraq but then claimed, when the votes for a second resolution were not forthcoming, that we did not need this authorization after all; declared that the Geneva Conventions did not apply to the prisoners at Guantánamo Bay; passed off the abuses at Abu Ghraib, and also at Bagram, as the work of a few "bad apples"; and ignored the Israeli-Palestinian peace process in favor of regime change in Iraq. Sadly, the list goes on and on, notwithstanding a doubling of U.S. foreign aid since 2000, as well as some efforts by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and now Secretary of Defense Robert Gates to turn back to multilateral diplomacy. An entire generation of citizens around the world is being reared with no memory of the role the United States played in World War II and the Cold War but with plenty of evidence that the world's lone superpower is arrogant, incompetent, and indifferent.

A new U.S. president, of either party, must launch a diplomatic offensive to restore American moral and political leadership in the world. First, we must close Guantánamo. The American prison—and our treatment of "enemy com-

batants" in the War on Terror more generally—is the single most tangible symbol of what the rest of the world sees as our hypocrisy. We profess to uphold human rights and the rule of law, but we are holding, and abusing, hundreds of individuals who have virtually no legal rights or access to judicial review. We cannot possibly lead a global fight against terrorism as long as other nations see us as violating their laws and our own.

Second, we must get serious about nuclear disarmament. The Bush Administration has spent much of its second term trying to prevent nuclear proliferation in Iran and North Korea, but it has achieved frustratingly few results. It is time to return to the grand bargain laid out in the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, whereby non-nuclear powers—including the members of the "axis of evil"—agreed not to pursue nuclear weapons provided (1) they can receive technical assistance for civilian nuclear projects and (2) the nuclear powers agree to diminish their own arsenals over time. The American counter-proliferation agenda would find much more support around the world today if it grew from a shared commitment to a future free of nuclear violence.

Third, we should join the International Criminal Court. In 1998 the nations of the world took the unprecedented step of creating a permanent international court to try the most heinous crimes: war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other grave offenses. Instead of embracing this advance for the rule of law, the United States has refused to join the court, and indeed has actively worked to undermine it. We pride ourselves that in this country no one is above the law. But this pride should not end at the border. An America that binds itself to common principles and practices would be a far better advocate for justice in the world than one that makes rules only for others.

Fourth, we must reform the U.N. Security Council and other global institutions. Why should India, with a billion people, not have a permanent seat on the council? Why isn't a single African or Middle Eastern or Latin American country permanently represented on the world's highest decision-making body? Similarly, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have weighted voting systems that are stacked in favor of a handful of countries. As students of American history know, leaving large swaths of interested parties out of political institutions is a recipe for instability.

Fifth, we must try to stop global warming. Climate change threatens us all, but it will most affect the poor countries close to the equator. Consider Bangladesh, where 150 million people are packed onto a low-lying, flood-prone river delta: sea-level rise will decimate them, and yet Bangladeshis have almost no say in global climate policymaking, which is dominated by
the United States, the European Union, China, and other large nations. We are the world’s largest emitters, so without our intensive diplomatic engagement and leadership, the world will never take the steps necessary to reduce carbon emissions and develop new, clean sources of energy.

These five steps would go a long way toward restoring America’s political influence and diplomatic leadership in the world. As we see all too vividly and painfully in Iraq, force has its limits. Most of the threats we face today demand global cooperation, and cooperation demands diplomacy. Diplomacy, in turn, is a game of suasion, not coercion. The more that America is respected and admired in the world, the greater will our diplomatic powers be.

Equally important, taking these steps would allow us to reclaim the values—liberty, democracy, equality, justice, tolerance, humility, and faith—that bind us together as a nation. Recall the scene at Dachau. The country I know and love is a country that flies its flag alongside other nations, not above them. It is a country that negotiates rather than dictates. It is a country that leads through self-restraint rather than by proclaiming itself free of all constraints. It is a country that we have been, and can be again.

11. THE NATIONAL CHARACTER

BY EARL SHORRIS

The undoing of the American character has a long history. It took more than half a century from a summer’s day in August, when the United States used the first weapon of mass destruction, to the lies the Bush Administration used to cover its invasion of Iraq. Had there not been that horrific day at Hiroshima, and had the fear generated by that day not remained in the American consciousness, passed on from generation to generation, the Senate might not have voted Bush the power to invade a sovereign nation. But the World Trade Center had been destroyed by the time the Senate voted, and all the fears hidden away in the soul of a society in love with its comforts had reemerged—nowhere more powerfully than in the man who sits in a classroom full of children on 9/11, paralyzed by the dreadful news. It is not power but fear that corrupts—if not absolutely then deeply, beyond the barrier of reason. The wound of fear has produced six of the worst years in American history, worse even than the Civil War, for there is no Abraham Lincoln to guide the moral character of the country, nor is there a foreseeable end to this war: we can no longer be certain even of its geographical or political limits. We are a fearful nation now, led by fearful people. That is the problem we must try to resolve.

In the twentieth century, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a Lutheran minister and author of an important work of philosophy, raised again Aristotle’s question of a disposition to evil. It was not so much a single evil act that concerned Bonhoeffer, a German, as it was the disposition to evil. His concern led him to leave a safe position in the United States and return to Germany to oppose Hitler. He was implicated in the plot to kill the Führer, and Bonhoeffer was sent to prison and then to Flossenbürg concentration camp. Shortly before the liberation of the camp he was stripped, marched through the corridors to the gallows, and hanged. His legacy is that an ordinary man, not a hero, may raise the hero’s question about a government. Do the actions of the Bush Administration and its supporters in the Congress result from a disposition to evil? And if that is not the disposition of all of them, it cannot be denied in the case of Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rove, Wolfowitz, and even Bush himself.

If their actions had been limited to the prosecution of a war, the war itself might be called a single evil act, but it is part of a congeries of acts that point in at least some persons to a disposition to evil. No more serious charge can be levied against a person or a government. If the charge is correct, Bonhoeffer’s life tells us that we should not wait for historians to make the judgment. And if the judgment is correct, we should try to understand the etiology of evil.

The war did not come about because of a political miscalculation or the misreading of an unavoidable accident. It is not an error. It is an ethical failure that has spread through every department of this administration, into the Congress, and down into the states. In the promoters of the war, Paul Wolfowitz chief among them, we can see that fearsome times, fearful ideas, underlay their history and thinking. For Wolfowitz it